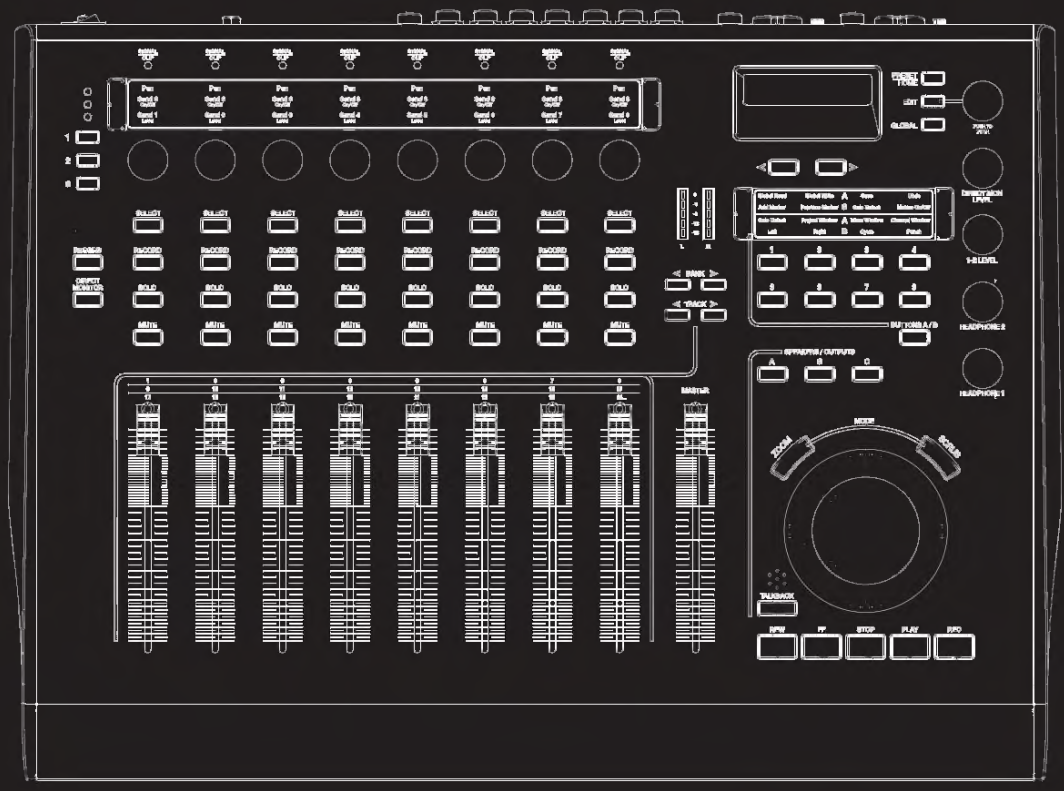
ALESIS®

MasterControl Studio Interface



REFERENCE MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your purchase of the Alesis MasterControl!

The MasterControl is Alesis's most advanced computer recording product to date and designed to be the centerpiece of your studio. Just consider this list of features:

- 24-bit, 192kHz audio interface with analog preamplifiers and line inputs, plus ADAT and S/PDIF digital audio inputs. Up to twenty-six inputs and six outputs can be used simultaneously. Standard MIDI inputs and outputs are included, too.
- Audiophile performance from 111dB ADCs, 114db DACs, and a high-definition microphone preamplifier design. All line inputs and outputs are balanced for maximum signal-to-noise (SNR) performance.
- Full featured control surface with 100mm motorized faders, three-row knob control, assignable buttons, transport control, preview functionality, and a dedicated display to keep you oriented at all times.
- Templates for all the most popular DAWs are included. Call up a preset and use the included templates to make the most out of your preferred music creation software.
- Sophisticated control room functionality including freely assignable outputs, dedicated buttons for speaker switching, two independent headphone outputs, and integrated talkback microphone.
- DSP-driven, 26x6 built-in hardware mixer for tracking live instruments and vocals with no discernible latency.
- Low-latency ASIO, WDM, and CoreAudio drivers for high performance and the lowest possible latency.
- Steinberg Cubase and Ableton Live Lite Alesis Edition included in the box so you can get started recording and mixing immediately.

■ How this manual is organized

This reference manual is designed to get you up and running with the MasterControl fast. After providing an overview of the MasterControl's physical features, the manual guides you through driver installation and then connecting your MasterControl to your DAW software.

Once you have connected your MasterControl, you are ready to move on to the next step: customizing the MasterControl for your own mode of working. This customization occurs within the GLOBAL menus.

Next, you will learn about the powerful features of the built-in DIRECT MONITORING mixer.

At the end of this manual, there is a quick tutorial for starting a Cubase LE project, followed by a list of unique features pertinent to the various presets.

Enjoy your Alesis MasterControl—the new centerpiece of your recording studio!

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FIRST THINGS FIRST: DRIVER INSTALLATION

IMPORTANT!!! *Follow these steps BEFORE you plug in your MasterControl for the first time.*

If your computer has Internet access, go to **http://www.alesis.com/mastercontrol**. It's possible that updated drivers have been posted there since the time the software DVD included with your MasterControl was printed.

WINDOWS

If you are using the drivers from the DVD, click to begin the MasterControl driver installer from the DVD's splash screen.

If you downloaded the drivers from http://www.alesis.com, open them from the location where you saved them.

Depending upon your computer's configuration, you will be guided through as few as one and as many as **four** separate (though similar-looking) driver installations: one for "Alesis MasterControl," one for "Alesis Firewire Audio," and two for "Alesis Firewire MIDI." For each of the installations that occur, you may see the window shown here warning you that the drivers have not passed Microsoft Logo Certification. Click "Continue Anyway," and follow the on-screen instructions.

*These drivers include the two most popular standards for audio interfacing – **WDM** (the "Windows Driver Model" built by Microsoft) and **ASIO** (the "Audio Stream Input/Output" standard used by many audio software applications).*

Hardware Installation
The software you are installing for this hardware:
Alesis MasterControl
has not passed Windows Logo testing to verify its compatibility with Windows XP. (Tell me why this testing is important.)
Continuing your installation of this software may impair or destabilize the correct operation of your system either immediately or in the future. Microsoft strongly recommends that you stop this installation now and contact the hardware vendor for software that has passed Windows Logo testing.
Continue Anyway
STOP Installation

Be sure to complete every stage of the installation. Do not cancel any of the installations, as they are all required for proper operation. When all the drivers are installed, you will see a message at the bottom right of your screen stating, "Your new hardware is installed and ready to use."

MAC OS X

Driver installation in Mac OS X is more straightforward, as only CoreAudio and CoreMIDI drivers are installed. From the DVD, nagivate to the appropriate folder for MasterControl drivers. Click the installer program to install the drivers.

Note: *Mac OS X 10.4 or higher is required by the MasterControl.*

INSTALLING THE OPTIONAL APPLICATIONS

The software DVD that comes with the MasterControl contains some powerful music applications.

If you don't already have a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) program, install Cubase LE and or Ableton Live Lite Alesis Edition, both of which are provided on the DVD. These programs are a fantastic way to get started in computer-based recording. You may find that they are the only programs you need.

Due to their limited track counts, these programs cannot access all of the MasterControl's twenty-six inputs at the same time.

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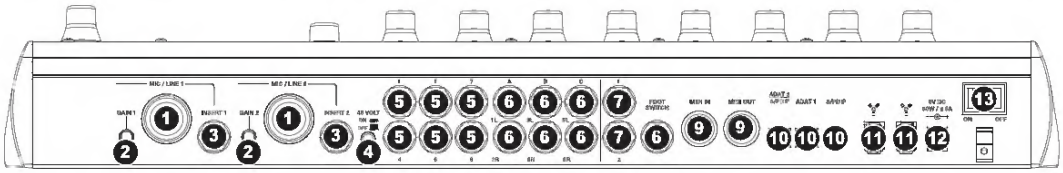
REAR PANEL FEATURES



1. **MIC / LINE INPUTS** – These two inputs can accept microphones (using an XLR cable) or an instrument or line-level device (using a 1/4" cable) such as a guitar, bass, sampler, or other audio device. These are balanced, low-impedance inputs. For best results when connecting balanced, line-level gear, use a TRS (tip-ring-sleeve) cable to connect to the 1/4" inputs.

2. **GAIN KNOBS** – The two MIC / LINE INPUTS each have a small dedicated GAIN knob for gain trim adjustment. By sweeping the GAIN knob, the XLR input provides from +9dB to +59dB of gain, perfect for a wide range of microphones. The 1/4" TRS input provides from -7dB to +43dB of gain, allowing you to attenuate overly "hot" signals from line-level equipment.

3. **INSERTS** – These two inputs can be used to connect a compressor, equalizer, noise gate, or other external processor to the corresponding channel. A channel insert affects the channel's audio before it is sent to your DAW. Use a dedicated insert cable to connect external gear to the insert jacks.

4. **PHANTOM POWER** – For phantom-powered mics, depress this button labeled "48 VOLT." Note that this button applies phantom power to the XLR portion of the combo jacks (not the 1/4" portion of those jacks) for both inputs 1 and 2.

   To minimize noise, only engage the MasterControl's phantom power if you are using a mic that requires it.

5. **LINE INPUTS** – Use 1/4" cables to connect your instruments or line-level devices to these six, fixed-gain inputs. Like the MIC / LINE INPUTS, these inputs are balanced (TRS). They can be used with both unbalanced and balanced input equipment.

6. **MONITOR / LINE OUTPUTS** – Connect your monitors and/or external processing gear to these outputs using 1/4" cables. These six outputs function in stereo pairs as follows (and are labeled as such on the rear panel):

   - "A" outputs (Channels 1 and 2)
   - "B" outputs (Channels 3 and 4)
   - "C" outputs (Channels 5 and 6)

   Each of these channel pairs can be enabled individually or in any simultaneous combination via the three SPEAKERS / MONITORS buttons on the top panel. In the GLOBAL MENUS (discussed later), you can freely assign each of these outputs to any of the three stereo-pair outputs that come out of your computer Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) software.

7. **HEADPHONES** – You can connect two sets of stereo headphones to these outputs. Like the "A" / "B" / "C" outputs, you can choose any of the MasterControl's three stereo output pairs for each headphone output. The headphone volume levels are controlled by the HEADPHONE 1 and 2 knobs on the top panel.

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8. **FOOTSWITCH** – You may connect a remote footswitch to this jack. This can operate either as a control option surface or as a toggle switch to turn the MasterControl's talkback function on and off. Please refer to the GLOBAL MENUS section to configure your footswitch.

9. **MIDI IN / OUT** – You can use MIDI cables to connect an external MIDI device to these jacks.

> ***Note:*** *These MIDI connections may be disabled when recording at 176.4kHz and 192kHz sample rates.*

10. **DIGITAL INPUTS** – This area features an ADAT connection, a configurable ADAT/optical S/PDIF connection, and a coaxial (RCA) S/PDIF connection.

> *The digital section is INPUT only. The MasterControl does not have digital audio outputs.*

The number of channels available via the digital input jacks changes as you change sampling rates. Refer to the INPUTS / OUTPUTS & SAMPLING RATES section for more information.

11. **FIREWIRE** – Connect the MasterControl to your computer using either of these FireWire connections. The second jack can be used to daisy chain another firewire device, such as an external hard drive. If computer operation becomes glitchy, remove any other devices connected to your FireWire chain to see if that solves the problem.

12. **POWER IN** – Connect the included power adapter to the MasterControl here. Only use an approved Alesis adapter. Other adapters may damage your MasterControl.

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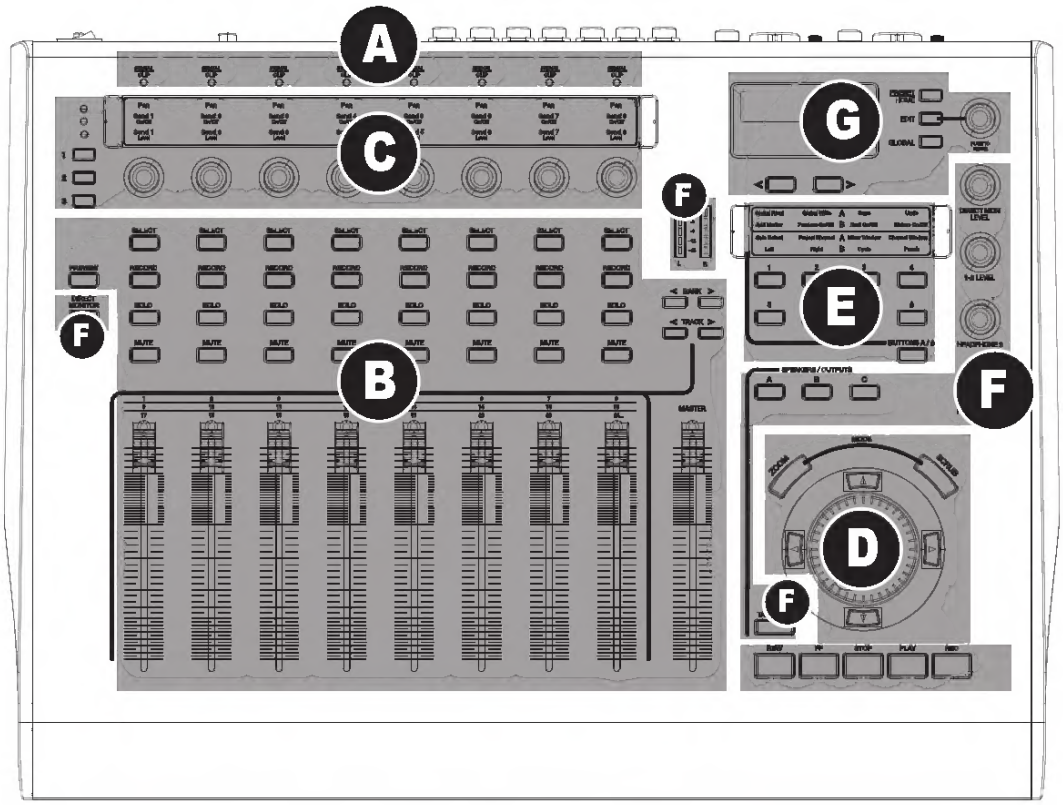
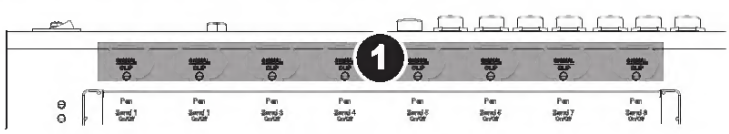
TOP PANEL FEATURES

This section breaks down the control surface into its functional areas. The area being discussed is shaded in the accompanying diagrams.



(A) Analog Input Signal Indicators
(B) DAW Control: Channels
(C) DAW Control: Multi-Function Knobs
(D) DAW Control: Transport
(E) DAW Control: Assignable Button Banks
(F) Monitoring / Control Room Features
(G) Configuration Controls

(A) ANALOG INPUT SIGNAL INDICATORS



1. **SIGNAL / CLIP** – There is one LED for each analog input channel. This LED turns green when signal is detected and turns red when the signal nears 0dBFS (zero decibels full-scale, the point where nasty digital distortion occurs). Avoid digital distortion either by reducing the trim on the first two inputs or by reducing the volume level on any equipment connected to the analog inputs.

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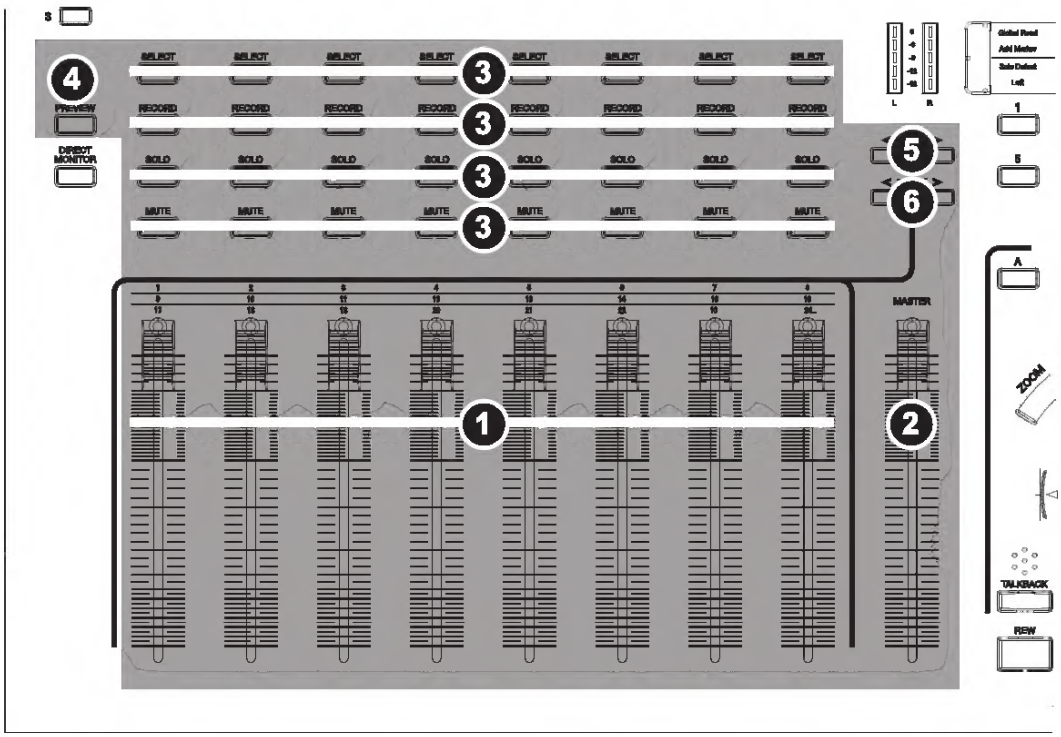
(B) DAW CONTROL: CHANNELS



1. **CHANNEL FADER** – Use this 100mm, touch-sensitive fader to adjust the volume levels of each channel. The exact level will be shown in the DISPLAY.

2. **MASTER FADER** – This fader controls the DAW's master fader. Note that different DAWs control this fader differently. Some DAWs, such as Pro Tools, do not make use of the fader at all.

3. **SELECT / RECORD / SOLO / MUTE** – These buttons control the corresponding functions in your DAW.

4. **PREVIEW** – Using this button to keep from becoming "lost" on the control surface. Press and hold PREVIEW and manipulate a control to see its operation and, if applicable, the DAW project's corresponding track name on the LCD display. As long as PREVIEW is held down, communication with the DAW will be suspended for most controls.

5. **< BANK >** – Use these buttons to move through your DAW project's channels in banks of eight. The first and last fader assignments for the selected bank will be shown in the DISPLAY.

6. **< TRACK >** – Use these buttons to move through your DAW project's channels one at a time.

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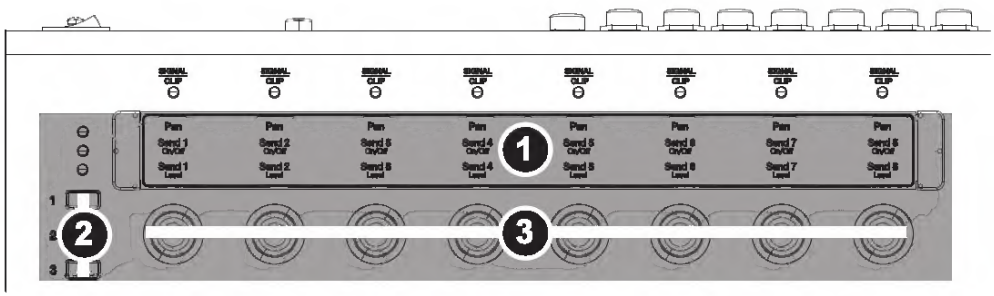
(C) DAW CONTROL: MULTI-FUNCTION KNOBS



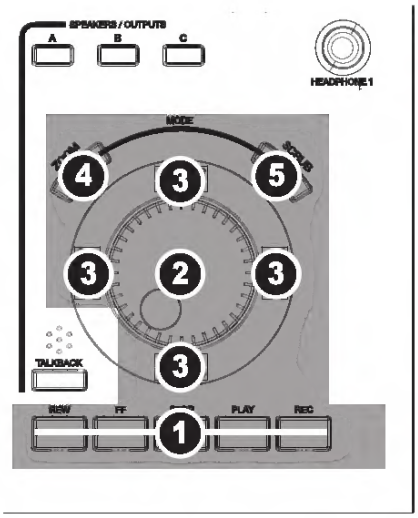
1. **TEMPLATE OVERLAY** – Place the long plasticized overlay (included) that matches your currently selected DAW preset here.

   Remove the plastic protective covering from the template overlay before placing it in the slot. Insert one end first, then bend the overlay slightly upwards in order to slide the overlay into the opposite slot.

2. **ROW SELECT** – Use the ROW SELECT buttons to select which row of parameters the CHANNEL KNOBS are currently controlling. An LED next to the selected row indicates the currently selected row.

3. **360° KNOB** – Turning this 360° knob adjusts the parameter indicated for the currently selected row.

(D) DAW CONTROL: TRANSPORT



1. **REW / FF/ STOP / PLAY / REC** – These buttons control your DAW's transport operations.

2. **JOG WHEEL** – Use this to scroll the backwards or forwards in your DAW. This has the same effect as the REW / FF buttons.

3. **UP / DOWN / LEFT / RIGHT** – These buttons serve different functions depending on whether the MasterControl's Zoom or Scrub functions are enabled.

4. **ZOOM** – When you engage this button, you can use the UP / DOWN / LEFT / RIGHT buttons to zoom in or out of the selected track in the DAW. Use the LEFT / RIGHT buttons to zoom horizontally or the UP / DOWN buttons to zoom vertically, depending on what your DAW allows.

5. **SCRUB** – When you engage this button, you can "scrub" through the audio in the DAW, playing it backwards or forwards at a pitch/speed determined by how fast the play head is moving. To scrub, you can use the LEFT / RIGHT buttons, the REW / FF buttons, or the JOGWHEEL.

   Note that ZOOM and SCRUB operate differently in different software programs. These features are not supported by all programs. For instance, SCRUB is not available in Cubase LE4.

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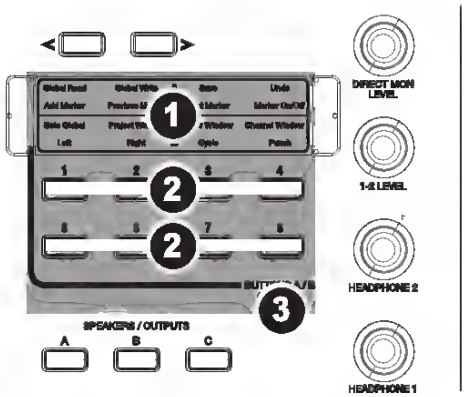
(E) DAW CONTROL: ASSIGNABLE BUTTON BANKS

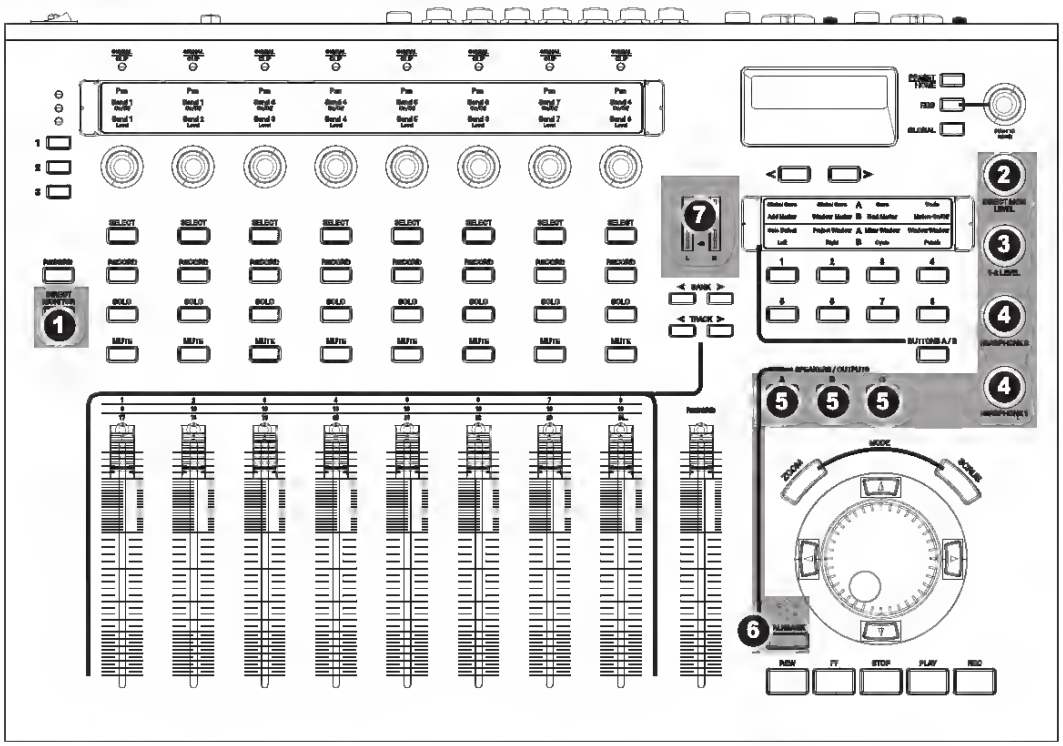


1. **TEMPLATE OVERLAY** - Place the short plasticized overlay (included) that matches your currently selected DAW preset here.

2. **ASSIGNABLE BUTTONS** – These buttons perform functions in your DAW such as SAVE, LOOP, etc. For most presets, you can re-assign the buttons to various functions by pressing EDIT at the upper right of the MasterControl.

3. **BUTTONS A / B** – Press this button to toggle between the two banks of ASSIGNABLE BUTTONS. When this button is unlit, the ASSIGNABLE BUTTONS are in Bank A. When this button is lit, the ASSIGNABLE BUTTONS are in Bank B. This provides control over 8 x 2 functions.

(F) MONITORING / CONTROL ROOM FEATURES



1. **DIRECT MONITOR** - Press this button to put the MasterControl into DIRECT MONITOR mode. In this mode, the channel strips on the control surface stop communicating with your DAW and, instead, affect the volume and panning for your incoming audio signals. This hardware direct monitoring allows you and your musicians to monitor your incoming audio with zero computer-induced latency.

   Use the BANK and TRACK buttons to navigate between the various analog and digital inputs. For more information on this important feature, see the DIRECT MONITOR section later in this manual.

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2. **DIRECT MON LEVEL** – This knob raises or lowers your entire direct monitor mix. This allows you to blend your direct monitor signals with the audio being played from your computer.

3. **OUTPUT 1-2 LEVEL** – This knob controls the volume sent out of the analog outputs for any of the analog output pairs that are set to listen to DAW outputs 1/2.

4. **HEADPHONE 1 / 2** – These knobs control the volume for the corresponding HEADPHONE 1 and 2 outputs on the rear panel. You can select which stereo channels are routed to these outputs in the Global Menus (see the GLOBAL MENUS section for more information).

5. **SPEAKERS / OUTPUTS** – These buttons mute or activate output from each of the three physical analog output pairs. To switch a stereo mix between multiple sets of speakers, set each of the three output pair sources in the global menus to OUTPUT 1/2.

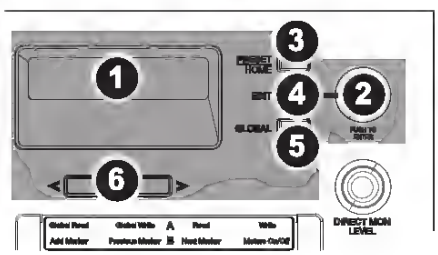
6. **TALKBACK** – Pressing this button will let you speak into the built-in microphone (right above the button) to your musicians. This signal will interrupts any audio that would otherwise be playing. Select which pairs of channels allow talkback, and set the talkback volume, in the Global Menus (see the GLOBAL MENUS section for more information).

7. **LED METERS** – These meters measure the audio signal level of the Output Source 1/2 sent from your computer software to the MasterControl.

(G) CONFIGURATION CONTROLS

1. **DISPLAY** – Information related to the MasterControl's functions will be shown in this display. This includes functions currently being adjusted, pages in menus, knob settings, volume levels, the current bank or track, etc.

2. **VALUE / ENTER** – Turn this knob to scroll through the various options shown in the DISPLAY. Push the knob to enter your selection.



3. **PRESET / HOME** – Press this button to enter (or exit) Preset Selection. Use the VALUE / ENTER encoder to scroll through the Presets to find the one corresponding to your DAW. Press the encoder to select the preset. Do this ***before*** you open your DAW. The Presets are as follows:

- Preset 1: Cubase / Nuendo
- Preset 2: Ableton Live
- Preset 3: Cakewalk Sonar
- Preset 4: Logic Pro
- Preset 5: Samplitude
- Preset 6: Digital Performer
- Preset 7: Alesis HD24
- Preset 8: ProTools
- Preset 9: Reason
- Preset 10: Soundtrack Pro
- Preset 11: Plug-in 1
- Preset 12: Plug-in 2

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4. **EDIT** – In Edit Mode, you can change the assignments for the A and B banks of the ASSIGNABLE buttons – a total of 16 assignable functions. Upon entering Edit Mode, the DISPLAY will look like the image on the right and the ASSIGNABLE BUTTONS will light up orange. First, press the button whose function you want to assign (the other buttons will become unlit). Then, use the VALUE / ENTER encoder to scroll through the functions. Press VALUE / ENTER to select one. You may assign the same function to multiple buttons.

   Different functions are available for different DAWs. This depends on what the DAWs support. For instance, an option to rapidly "flip" the faders and knobs, so that, for instance, you can perform panning via the faders, is available for many but not all DAW presets.

5. **GLOBAL** – Press this to enter (or exit) the Global Mode where you can adjust the MasterControl's global configuration. Use the PAGE buttons to toggle through the available pages in the Global Menus. Use VALUE / ENTER to scroll through the available options for any page; press it to save your change for each menu. See the GLOBAL MENUS section for more information.

6. **< PAGE >** – Press either of these buttons to move to the previous (<) or next (>) page in the menu in the DISPLAY.

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CONFIGURING YOUR DIGITAL AUDIO WORKSTATION SOFTWARE FOR USE WITH THE MASTERCONTROL

Once your MasterControl is connected to your computer, there are three steps to perform to establish audio and control surface communication with your Digital Audio Workstation (DAW):

1) On the MasterControl, select the proper MasterControl preset for your DAW.

2) In your DAW, select the MasterControl as your audio input/output device.

3) Still in your DAW, select the MasterControl as a control surface:

   a. Add a "Mackie Control" device as an available control surface (the MasterControl uses the "Mackie Control"/"MCU" protocol)*;

   b. Choose the proper Alesis Firewire MIDI ports as the INPUT and OUTPUT ports for the "Mackie Control" control surface.

The following pages show you how to set up the Master Control to work with your DAW. The instructions are provided for Windows users in most of the following examples.

Mac users should note that, in all cases, the Alesis drivers should be selected under AUDIO MIDI setup before opening your DAW. In most cases for Mac, it will not be necessary for you to choose the Alesis drivers within your DAW as well.

SELECTING THE PROPER PRESET FOR YOUR DAW

To select the Preset to match your DAW, press PRESET/HOME on the MasterControl. Turn the ENCODER to select the DAW program that you are using. Finally, press the ENCODER to accept the selection. Do all this ***before*** opening the DAW itself.

The MasterControl uses the industry-standard "Mackie Control" protocol with most DAWs. With Pro Tools, it uses the "HUI" protocol.

Important: Be sure to select the proper preset for you DAW! If you use the wrong MasterControl preset with a DAW program, the communication between your computer and the MasterControl will not work correctly.

Your Preset selection will be saved even after you turn your MasterControl off. Therefore, you will only need to change your preset when you switch to using a different DAW.

---

* For Pro Tools, the "HUI" protocol is used, not the "Mackie Control" protocol. Otherwise, the process is the same.

For all DAWs except ProTools, be sure to select "Mackie Control" or its equivalent, "MCU" as the control surface — not "HUI."

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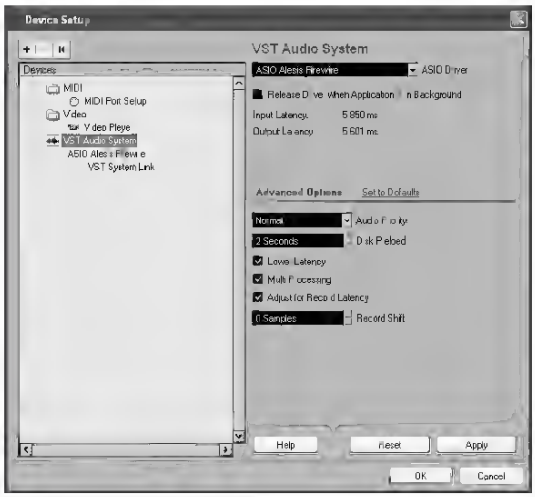
CUBASE AND NUENDO SETUP: SELECTING THE AUDIO DRIVER (WINDOWS ONLY)

This discussion addresses Cubase. Nuendo setup is similar.

1. From the menu bar, go to **Devices ▶ Device Setup...**

2. Click on "VST Audio System" in the left-hand pane. Then, in the right-hand pane, select "ASIO Alesis Firewire" for the ASIO driver.



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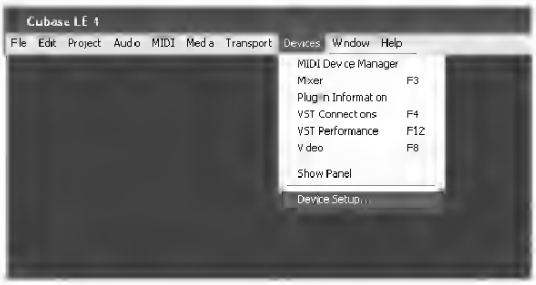
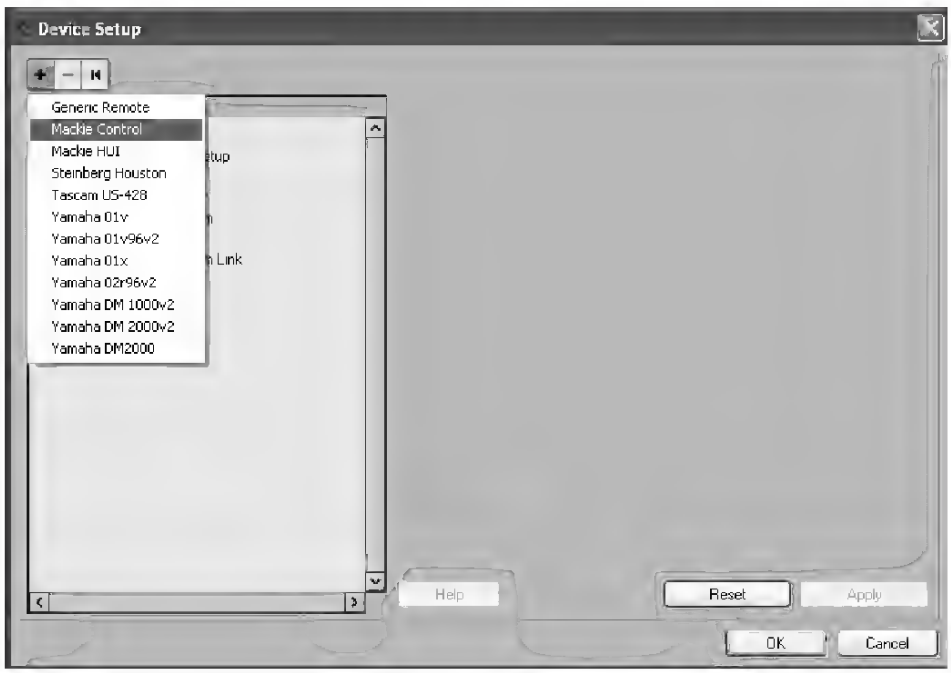
CUBASE AND NUENDO SETUP: CONTROL SURFACE (MAC AND WINDOWS)

1. Again from the menu bar, go to **Devices ▶ Device Setup...**



2. Click the "+" button on the upper-left corner of the window and select "Mackie Control" from the list.



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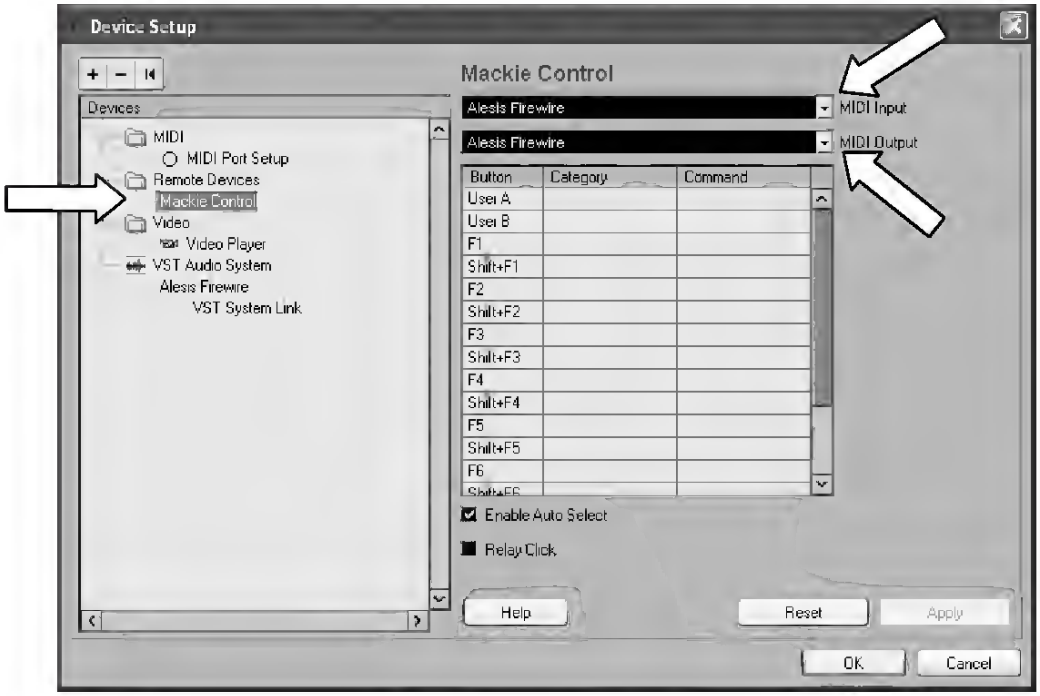
3. Under **Remote Devices ▶ Mackie Control**, select "Alesis FireWire" from the MIDI Input and MIDI Output drop-down menus.



4. Press "OK" to accept this setting.

5. Once the MasterControl is selected as the audio device, individual channels must be activated for use. From the "Devices" menu, select "VST Connections."

Some versions of Cubase, including Cubase LE provided with the MasterControl, do not allow all inputs to be used simultaneously.

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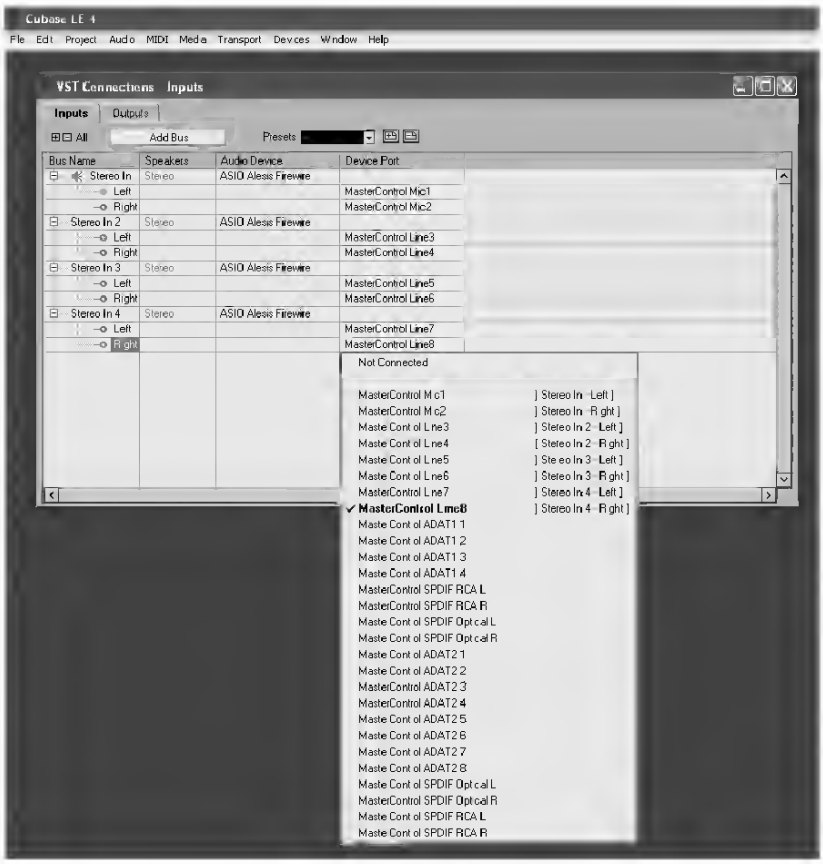
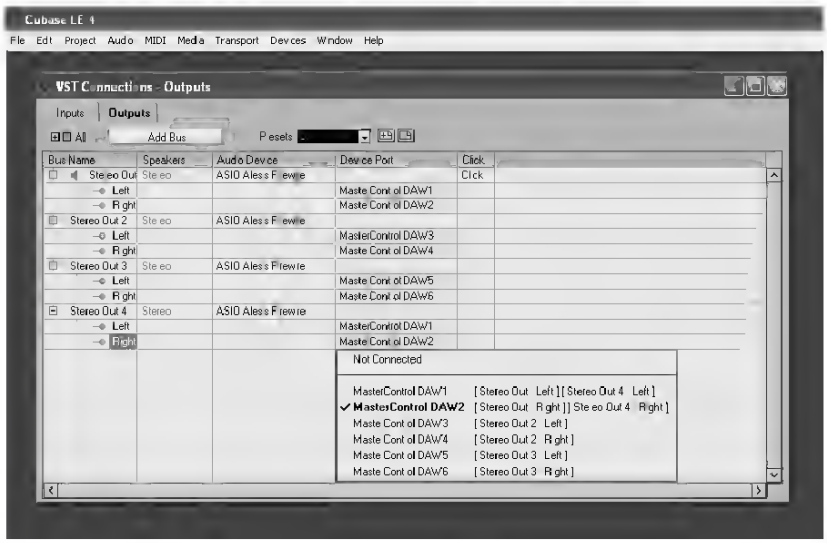
6. In this first tab labeled "Inputs," you can decide which of the MasterControl's channels will be routed to the Cubase's inputs. Click the entries under "Device Port" to select an available channel from a drop-down menu. (This number and kind of available channels will vary depending on the sampling rate.) If necessary, you can add more buses by clicking the "Add Bus" button.


Cubase LE 4
File Edit Project Audio MIDI Media Transport Devices Window Help
VST Connections Inputs
Inputs Outputs
All Add Bus Presets
Bus Name Speakers Audio Device Device Port
Stereo In Stereo ASIO Alesis Firewire
Left MasterControl Mic1
Right MasterControl Mic2
Stereo In 2 Stereo ASIO Alesis Firewire
Left MasterControl Line3
Right MasterControl Line4
Stereo In 3 Stereo ASIO Alesis Firewire
Left MasterControl Line5
Right MasterControl Line6
Stereo In 4 Stereo ASIO Alesis Firewire
Left MasterControl Line7
Right MasterControl Line8
Not Connected
MasterControl Mic1 [Stereo In Left]
MasterControl Mic2 [Stereo In Right]
MasterControl Line3 [Stereo In 2 Left]
MasterControl Line4 [Stereo In 2 Right]
MasterControl Line5 [Stereo In 3 Left]
MasterControl Line6 [Stereo In 3 Right]
MasterControl Line7 [Stereo In 4 Left]
MasterControl Line8 [Stereo In 4 Right]
MasterControl ADAT1 1
MasterControl ADAT1 2
MasterControl ADAT1 3
MasterControl ADAT1 4
MasterControl SPDIF RCA L
MasterControl SPDIF RCA R
MasterControl SPDIF Optical L
MasterControl SPDIF Optical R
MasterControl ADAT2 1
MasterControl ADAT2 2
MasterControl ADAT2 3
MasterControl ADAT2 4
MasterControl ADAT2 5
MasterControl ADAT2 6
MasterControl ADAT2 7
MasterControl ADAT2 8
MasterControl SPDIF Optical L
MasterControl SPDIF Optical R
MasterControl SPDIF RCA L
MasterControl SPDIF RCA R

7. In the "Outputs" tab, you can decide which of the Cubase channels will be routed to the MasterControl's outputs. Click the entries under "Device Port" to select an available channel from a drop-down menu. Note that the only available options are the six physical outputs (the MON / LINE OUTPUTS on the rear panel of the MasterControl).


Cubase LE 4
File Edit Project Audio MIDI Media Transport Devices Window Help
VST Connections - Outputs
Inputs Outputs
All Add Bus Presets
Bus Name Speakers Audio Device Device Port Click
Stereo Out Stereo ASIO Alesis Firewire Click
Left MasterControl DAW1
Right MasterControl DAW2
Stereo Out 2 Stereo ASIO Alesis Firewire
Left MasterControl DAW3
Right MasterControl DAW4
Stereo Out 3 Stereo ASIO Alesis Firewire
Left MasterControl DAW5
Right MasterControl DAW6
Stereo Out 4 Stereo ASIO Alesis Firewire
Left MasterControl DAW1
Right MasterControl DAW2
Not Connected
MasterControl DAW1 [Stereo Out Left] [Stereo Out 4 Left]
MasterControl DAW2 [Stereo Out Right] [Stereo Out 4 Right]
MasterControl DAW3 [Stereo Out 2 Left]
MasterControl DAW4 [Stereo Out 2 Right]
MasterControl DAW5 [Stereo Out 3 Left]
MasterControl DAW6 [Stereo Out 3 Right]

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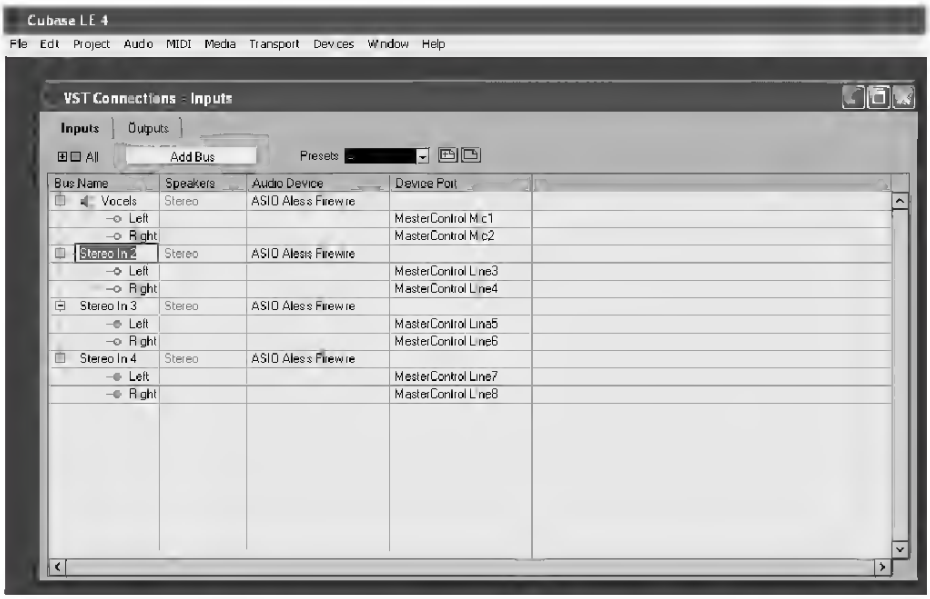
8. If you want, you can rename channels by clicking on the entry under "Bus Name." This is useful for keeping track of which instrument is on each stereo channel.



9. Close the window. You are now ready to begin recording with the MasterControl.

10. See the Cubase/Nuendo notes later in this manual for details on MasterControl operation with these DAWs.

ABLETON LIVE SETUP

1. From the menu bar, go to **Options** ▸ **Preferences** (Windows XP) or to **Live** ▸ **Preferences** (Mac).

Untitled - Live Lite Alesis Edition
File Edit Insert View Options Help
Edit MIDI Map Ctrl+M
Edit Key Map Ctrl+K
Computer MIDI Keyboard Ctrl+Shift+K
Delay Compensation
Time Ruler Format
Smaller Launch Quantization Ctrl+1
Larger Launch Quantization Ctrl+2
Launch Quantization Enabled Ctrl+4
Draw Mode Ctrl+B
Follow Ctrl+F
Solo In Place
MIDI Overdub
Preferences... Ctrl+,
Live Devices
Live 7 Lessons
live lite
ALESIS
Lessons are short interactive tutorials that can help you get more out of Live. Lessons are navigated much like websites. For help with navigation please click here.
Please note that some of these Lessons discuss features in the full version of Live that may not be applicable to this version of Live Lite.
Get Started - To launch one of Live's introductory Lessons click any of the buttons below.
A Tour of Live
Recording Audio
Drop Audio Effects Here

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2. Click the MIDI/Sync tab. Select "MackieControl" from the Control Surface drop-down menu, and select "Alesis FireWire" for the corresponding Input and Output.

3. Click the Audio tab. Select "ASIO" from the Driver Type drop-down menu. (The MasterControl will still work if another option like MME/DirectX is selected, but we recommend using ASIO as it is a better choice.) Then select "ASIO Alesis FireWire" as the Audio Device.

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4. Click "Input Config." In the window that appears, select the inputs from the MasterControl that you want to be sent to the DAW, then click "OK."

5. Click "Output Config." In the window that appears, select the outputs on the MasterControl to which the DAW will send its audio. We recommend the selecting the top two boxes, which correspond to the physical MON / LINE OUTPUTS 1 and 2 on the MasterControl. Click "OK" when you are done.

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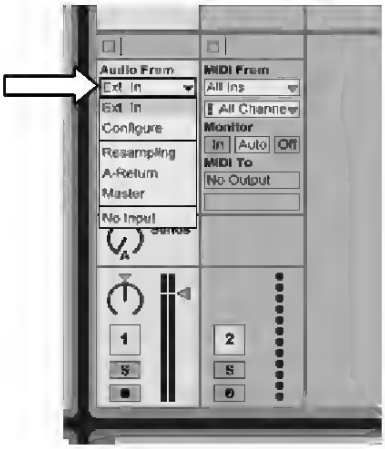
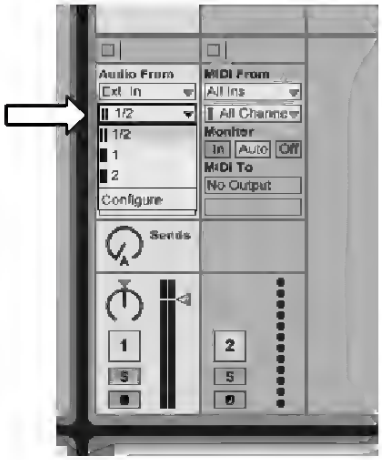
6. Close the Preferences window.
7. From the menu bar, go to **Insert ▸ Audio Track.**
8. Be sure the circular button on the right-hand side of the screen labeled "I-O" is on. Underneath each track, you should see the headings "Audio From," "Monitor," and "Audio To." (MIDI tracks will read "MIDI" instead of "Audio.")
9. In order for Live to receive audio from the MasterControl's outputs, the first box under "Audio From" should read "Ext. In." If it doesn't, click the box and select it.



10. Click the second box under "Audio From" and select the input from the MasterControl you want to assign to that track in Live. The choices available will depend on what you set in the Input Config. Window.



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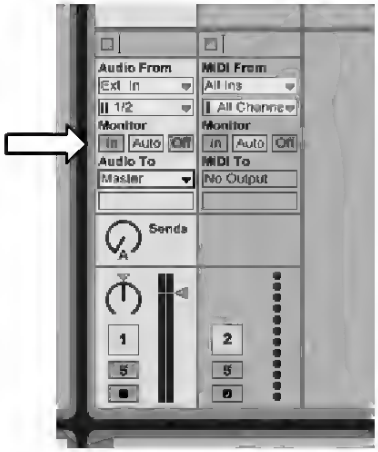
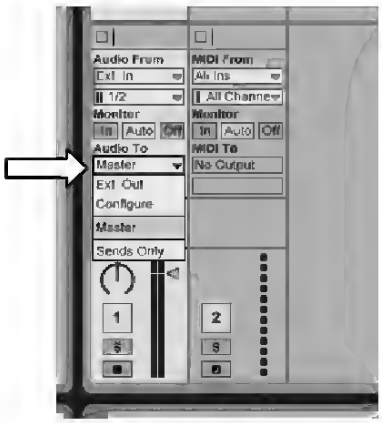
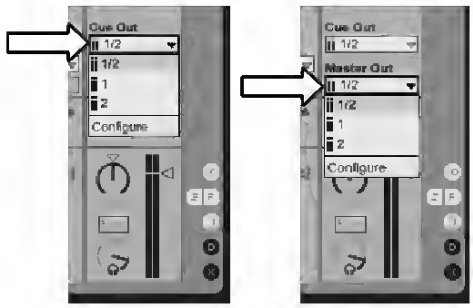
11. Underneath "Monitor," select the monitoring configuration you want. "Auto" will monitor the channel when it is "record-armed" or recording. "In" will monitor the channel continuously, whether it is being recorded or not. "Off" will disable monitoring for that track.



12. The box underneath "Audio To" should read "Master." If it doesn't, click the box and select it.



13. This process (Steps #9-12) should be repeated for each channel you want to record.
14. Under the Master channel in the window, find the "Cue Out" and "Master Out" boxes. Click them to select which outputs on the MasterControl will send out the audio from Live's Cue and Master mixes. The choices available will depend on what you set in the Output Config. Window.



15. When you have configured your inputs and outputs the way you want, you are ready to record.
16. See the Ableton Live notes later in this manual for details on MasterControl operation with Live.

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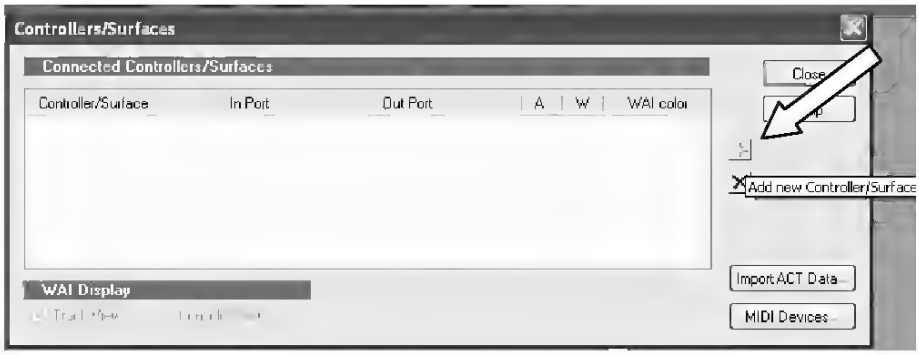
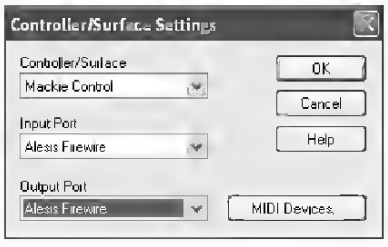
CAKEWALK SONAR SETUP

1. From the menu bar, go to **Options** ▸ **Controllers/Surfaces**.

2. Click the button with the "star" icon to add a new device.



3. Select "Mackie Control" from the Controller/Surface drop-down menu, and select "Alesis FireWire" for the Input Port and Output Port. Click "OK," then close the Controller/Surfaces window.



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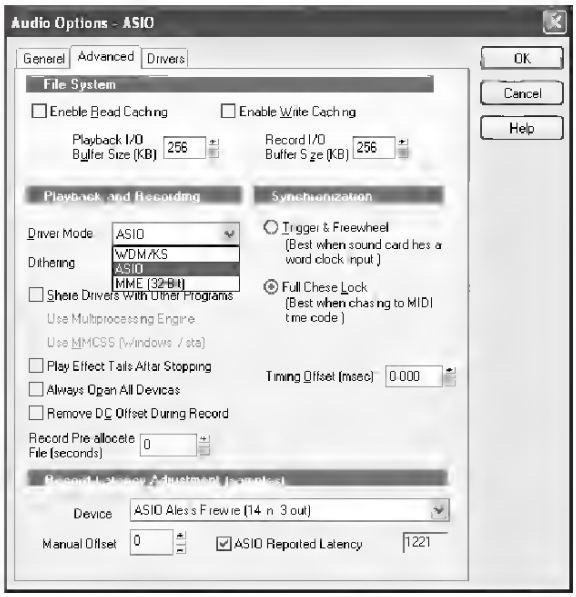
4. From the menu bar, go to **Options ▸ Audio...**"

5. Click the "Advanced" tab. Select "ASIO" as the "Driver Mode." Most users will find that this provides better performance than WDM/KS mode. If you change this setting, you will need to exit and then restart Sonar.



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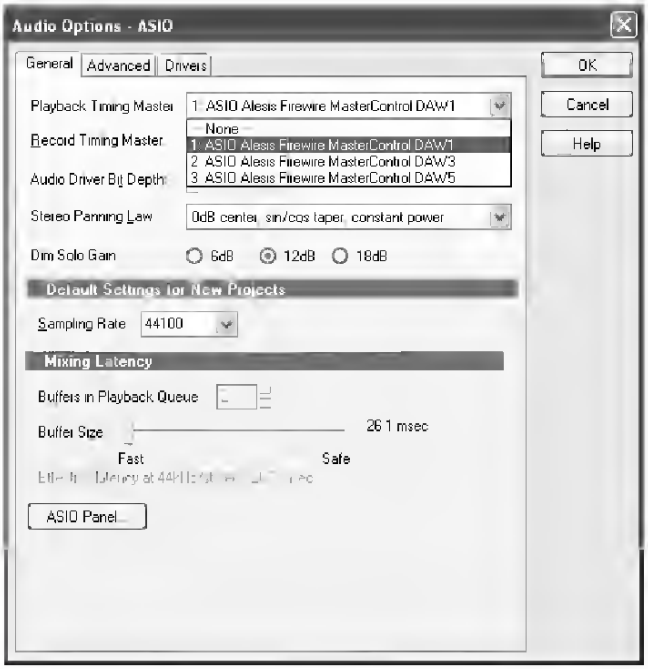
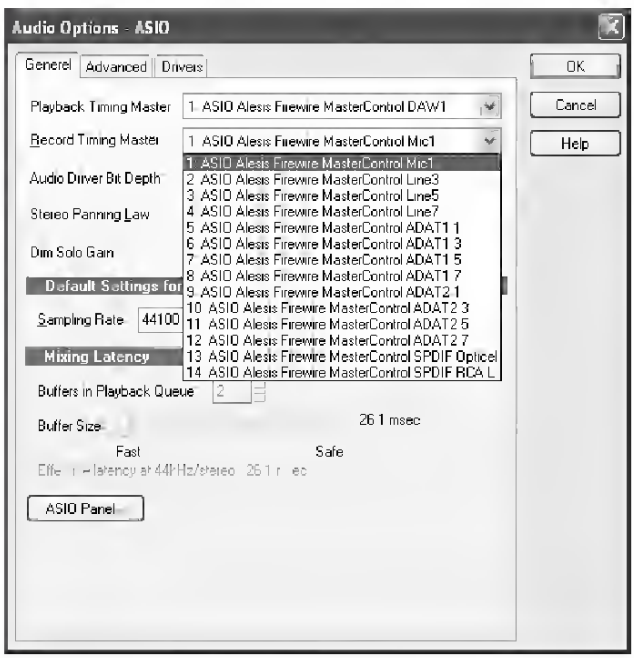
6. On the "General" tab, select any available MasterControl channels as the "Playback Timing Master." We recommend "ASIO Alesis FireWire MasterControl DAW1," which corresponds to the physical MON / LINE OUTPUTS 1 and 2 on the MasterControl.



7. Select any available analog MasterControl channel as the "Playback Record Master." The available channels (corresponding to the MasterControl's input channels) will depend on the sampling rate, which you can also set here in the "General" tab. Note that the options will always be odd-numbered channels as each channel shown actually corresponds to a stereo pair of channels on the MasterControl.


Audio Options - ASIO
General
Advanced
Drivers
OK
Cancel
Help
Playback Timing Master
1 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl DAW1
Record Timing Master
1 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl Mic1
1 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl Mic1
2 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl Line3
3 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl Line5
4 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl Line7
5 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl ADAT1 1
6 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl ADAT1 3
7 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl ADAT1 5
8 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl ADAT1 7
9 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl ADAT2 1
10 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl ADAT2 3
11 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl ADAT2 5
12 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl ADAT2 7
13 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl SPDIF Optical
14 ASIO Alesis Firewire MasterControl SPDIF RCA L
Audio Driver Bit Depth
Stereo Panning Law
Dim Solo Gain
Default Settings for
Sampling Rate
44100
Mixing Latency
Buffers in Playback Queue
Buffer Size
26.1 msec
Fast
Safe
ASIO Panel...

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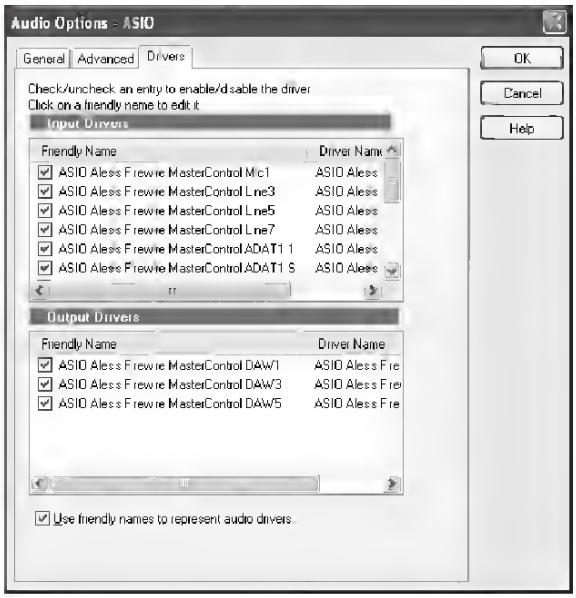
8. Move to the "Drivers" tab. Click on each input pair and also on the output pair to make them available to Sonar. The available input channels (corresponding to the MasterControl's input channels) will depend on the sampling rate, which you can set in the "General" tab. There will always be three available output channels, which correspond to the three stereo pairs of physical outputs (1/2, 3/4, and 5/6) on the MasterControl. Note that the options will always be odd-numbered channels as each channel shown actually corresponds to a stereo pair of channels on the MasterControl.



9. Click "OK" to close the "Audio Options" window and begin recording.
10. See the SONAR notes later in this manual for details on MasterControl operation with SONAR.

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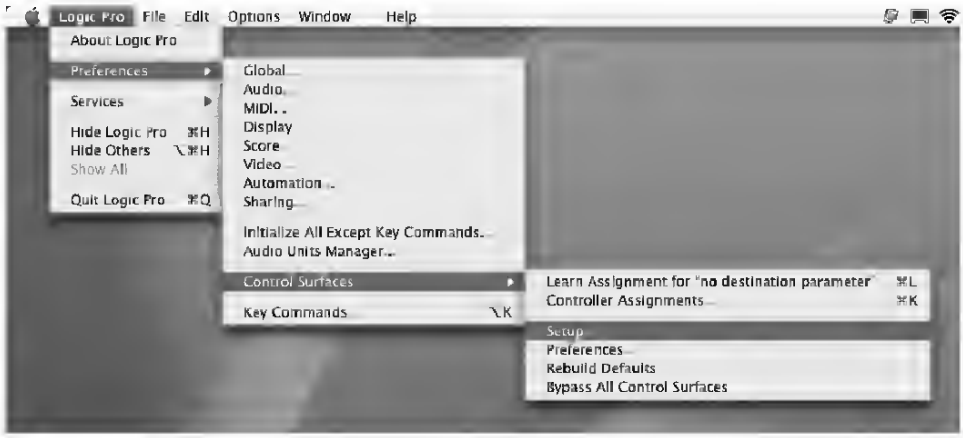
LOGIC PRO SETUP

1. From the menu bar, go to **Logic Pro ▸ Preferences ▸ Control Surfaces ▸ Setup.**



2. Click on "New" and select "Install" from the drop-down menu.

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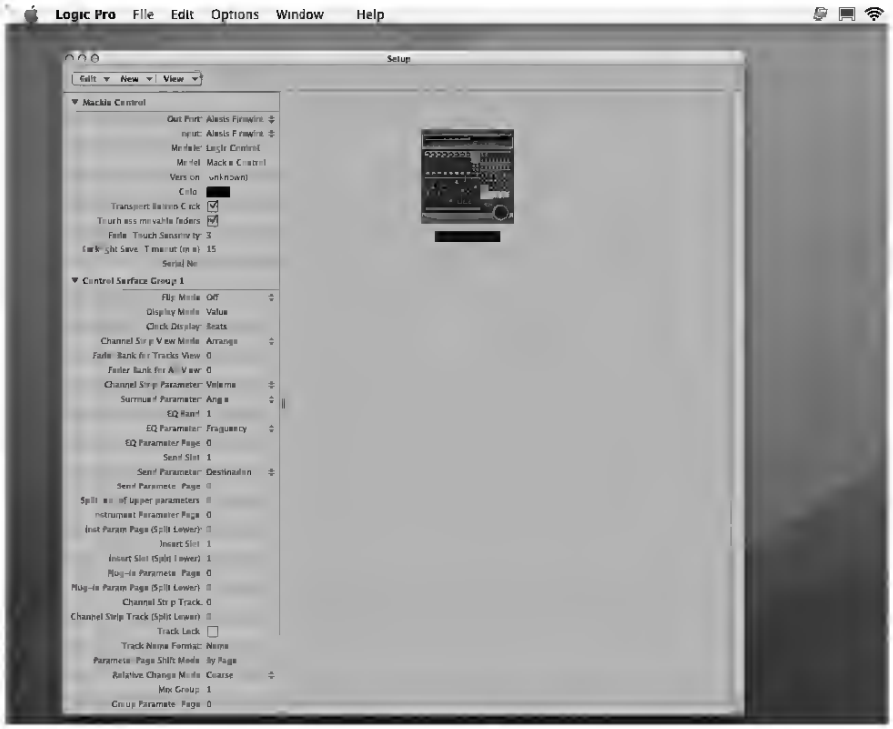
3. Select "Mackie Designs > Mackie Control > Logic Control" from the list, and click "Add" at the bottom-right. Close the window.

4. Select "Alesis FireWire" for the Out Port and Input.



5. See the Logic notes later in this manual for details on MasterControl operation with Logic.

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SAMPLITUDE SETUP

1. From the menu bar, go to **MIDI ▸ MIDI Options ▸ System Options ▸ Hardware Controller**.
2. Click the "Add New" button and select "Mackie Control" from the list.
3. Select "Alesis FireWire" for the "MIDI Input" and "MIDI Output," and be sure "Activate Controller" is checked.

DIGITAL PERFORMER SETUP

1. Open a new Finder window and go to **Applications ▸ Utilities▸ Audio MIDI Setup**.
2. Click on the "MIDI Devices" tab, then click the "Add Device" button.
3. Double-click on the new device and name it "MasterControl."
4. Select "Mackie" as the manufacturer and "Mackie Control" as the model. Apply these changes.
5. Connect the "Alesis FireWire" interface to this new device by clicking and dragging your cursor from the output of the "Alesis FireWire" to the input of the "MasterControl" and the output of the "MasterControl" to the input of the "Alesis FireWire."
6. Open Digital Performer.
7. Go to **Setup ▸ Control Surface Setup**.
8. Click the + button. Select "Mackie Control" as your driver and "Mackie Control > Mackie Control" as your MIDI device.

PRO TOOLS SETUP

1. From the menu bar, go to **Setup ▸ Peripherals ▸ MIDI Controllers**.
2. Select "HUI" from the drop-down list.
3. Set the "Receive From" and "Send To" to "Alesis FireWire."
4. Note that, under Pro Tools, the MasterControl can only function as a control surface. Pro Tools requires use of its own audio hardware.

REASON SETUP

1. From the menu bar, go to **Edit ▸ Preferences ▸ Control Surfaces and Keyboards**.
2. Click the "Add" button and choose "Mackie" from the drop-down list of manufacturers.
3. Set the "MIDI In Port" and "MIDI Out Port" to "Alesis FireWire."

SOUNDTRACK PRO SETUP

1. From the menu bar, go to **Soundtrack Pro ▸ Preferences ▸ Control Surfaces**.
2. Click the + button and choose "Mackie" from the drop-down list of manufacturers.
3. Set the "Input" and "Output" to "Alesis FireWire."

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AUDIO INPUTS AND OUTPUTS

■ Channels Sent from the MasterControl to the Computer

The FireWire port sends every available individual MasterControl channel to the computer. This means that, from the MasterControl, you can send a maximum of **26** channels: eight analog channels, 16 digital channels over the ADAT connections, and two digital channels over the coaxial S/PDIF connection. The number of available channels will vary depending on (1) how you use the ADAT 2 / S/PDIF connection and (2) the sampling rate you set.

All digital audio carried over the FireWire connection is 24-bit PCM data.

■ Channels Received from the Computer into the MasterControl

The Firewire port receives **6** channels back from the computer—a stereo audio stream for each of three channel pairs. From the MasterControl, you can freely assign these three stereo pairs to any of Output Sources A, B, and C as well as to Headphones 1 and 2.

If they are used, direct monitoring signals will be blended in with these channels. Using the talkback mic will "take over" these channels.

You can use either of the two FireWire ports on the back of the MasterControl. The other port can be used to attach another FireWire-based computer peripheral, such as an external hard drive.

For more information on how these channels work and how to monitor them, refer to MONITORING & CONTROL ROOM FEATURES.

■ Available Channels at Various Sample Rates

The number of inputs available to you drops as you move from the single sample rates up to the double and then quadruple rates.

At single rates (44.1kHz and 48kHz), you can use:

- 8 analog channels (the MIC / LINE and LINE INPUTS)
- 2 coaxial S/PDIF channels (the RCA S/PDIF INPUT)
- 8 ADAT channels (the ADAT 1 INPUT)
- 8 ADAT channels *or* 2 optical S/PDIF channels (the ADAT 2 / S/PDIF INPUT)

At dual rates (88.2kHz and 96kHz), you can use:

- 8 analog channels (the MIC / LINE and LINE INPUTS)
- 2 coaxial S/PDIF channels (the RCA S/PDIF INPUT)
- 4 ADAT channels (the ADAT 1 INPUT)
- 2 optical S/PDIF channels (the ADAT 2 / S/PDIF INPUT)

At quad rates (176.4kHz and 192kHz), you can use:

- 8 analog channels (the MIC / LINE and LINE INPUTS)

All of the outputs—three stereo pairs, plus the two headphone outputs—are always available in all sample rates.

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WINDOWS AUDIO CONFIGURATION

CHOOSING THE MASTERCONTROL AS YOUR DEFAULT AUDIO DEVICE

To use your MasterControl as your default Windows sound device, follow these steps:

1. From the Windows **Start** menu, choose **Control Panel**.
2. Choose **Sounds and Audio Devices** (XP) or **Sounds** (Vista).
3. Click the "Audio" tab. Change the default devices for both sound playback and sound recording to "Alesis FireWire Audio." If you will be using MIDI, select "Alesis FireWire MIDI" from the MIDI music playback menu.

4. Click the "Voice" tab. Change the voice playback and voice recording settings to the "Alesis FireWire Audio" option.

5. Click "Apply" to apply these changes.

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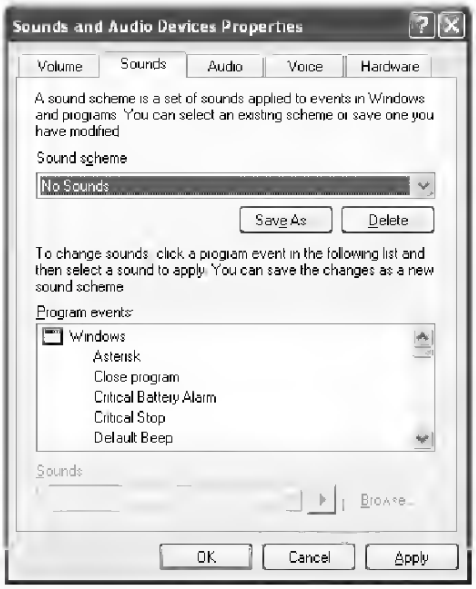
DISABLING WINDOWS SYSTEM SOUNDS

Windows System Sounds – the sounds that Windows plays to signal starting up, shutting down, alerts and so forth – can interfere with your audio recording. We strongly suggest disabling these sounds.

1. Click the "Sounds" tab of **Sounds and Audio Devices** (XP) or **Sounds** (Vista). Under the "Sound Scheme" drop-down menu, choose "No Sounds."



2. Click "OK" to accept this entry and close the dialog box.

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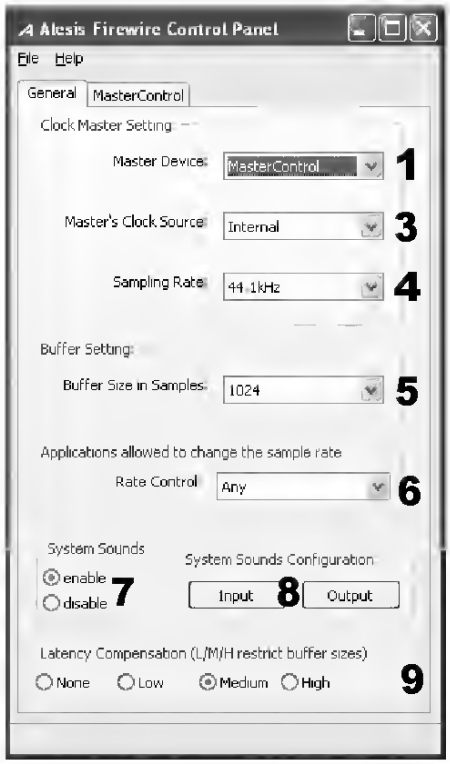
ALESIS FIREWIRE CONTROL PANEL (WINDOWS)

Open the Alesis Firewire Control Panel from the shortcut on your Desktop, the Programs menu, or from within your audio application.

To open the control panel within Cubase in Windows, go to **Devices ▶ Device Setup... ▶ VST MultiTrack,** *then under the "ASIO Alesis Firewire" Device, click the "Control Panel"*



1. **Selecting the Alesis MasterControl:** Be sure that your MasterControl is shown here. If it is not shown, then your computer does not "see" it. Check the mixer's connection to your computer.

   You can chain multiple Alesis Firewire devices together via their Firewire ports. If you do so, you must choose one of them, here, as the clock master for your entire system.

2. **Setting the Mixer Nickname:** You can change the name of the mixer as it's seen by the recording program on your particular computer. Once this is done, choose "Reset All" in Cubase's Devices/Device Setup window (or the equivalent command in other programs) to make the change to the mixer flow down to the names of the input and output channels.

3. **Specify the Audio Clock Source:**
   - **Internal:** Use this setting if you are using the MasterLink on its own, without any ADAT or S/PDIF input devices.
   - **FireWire:** Use this setting if you have another FireWire audio device connected to the MasterControl and you want that device's clock to drive the MasterControl's clock. No additional cables are necessary—the MasterControl will read the clock signal coming from the other device over the FireWire cable.
   - **ADAT and S/PDIF options:** Use an appropriate setting here if you are using an external ADAT or S/PDIF analog-to-digital converter.

If you're using the MasterControl by itself, you don't need to worry about clocking. Just make sure that the "Clock Source" parameter in the MasterControl's control panel is set to "Internal."

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4. **Adjusting the sample rate:** You can change the sample rate that the MasterControl uses in this area.

   Some audio programs require that you change the sample rate under their **Project Setup** or similar menus. For instance, Cubase will take control of this parameter.

5. **Adjusting latency by changing the buffer size:** "Latency" refers to the amount of time it takes for audio to get into and out of the computer. In the best of all possible worlds, there would be no *such thing* as *latency* – we would hear audio the moment it was created. However, computers have limited processing power, and they can "choke," cut off recording, or crash programs if they are asked to handle too much data all at once.

   In digital recording systems, all digital input devices must be synchronized to the same clock. Use word clock cables or other connections to synchronize multiple external converters, if you are using them.

   To minimize this risk, audio can be stored in a buffer for a certain amount of time. This buffering helps smooth out the stream of data that the computer needs to handle. In the end, all of the audio is sorted out and played correctly, but with a delay.

   Here are the basic considerations to consider when adjusting buffer sizes:

   - **Lower buffer size = less latency but higher risk of audio problems**
   - **Higher buffer size = more latency but lower risk of audio problems**
   - **Very high buffer size = possible system instability**

   For most systems, there is a "sweet spot" where latency is not too high and system performance is good. Experiment with raising or lowering buffer sizes to hit this sweet spot.

   As you begin adding plug-in EQ, compression, and so forth to your project, your computer will need to work harder. If you start to hear clicks, pops and other glitches in your audio, consider increasing your buffer size at this time.

   Many people use two latency settings—a lower one when recording tracks and a higher one when mixing.

   As a final note, one tremendous benefit that the MasterControl offers is that you can monitor through it without latency at all. Press the DIRECT MONITOR button (and mute the input monitoring in your DAW) to hear what you're recording without any delay between the incoming and monitored signal.

6. **Specify how sample rates can change:** Since Windows (and various Windows applications) have a nasty tendency to try and take control over your audio sample rate – often without notice – this section allows you to ignore those sample change events.

   If you do not mind your sample rate changing freely, choose "Allow SR Changes."

   To allow only ASIO applications (like Cubase) to change the sample rate, select "Allow ASIO changes only."

   You can lock the sample rate – such that it can only be changed using this control panel – by selecting "Apps cannot change SR." This is the safest of all these options.

   Whichever setting you choose, the sample rate can always be changed from within this control panel. Note, however, that if you have an audio application open, you can cause conflicts with it if you try to set the sample rate differently here compared to the setting in the open audio application.

7. **Enable or disable WDM Audio (Windows only):** If you are using ASIO applications exclusively and do not need access to Windows system sounds, Windows Media Player or other media players, consider un-checking this box. Doing so helps ensure that unwanted audio from other applications does not intrude on your intended audio output.

8. **Specify the System Sounds Configuration:** These buttons will call up other windows where you can set the configuration of input and output channels of the MasterControl. The default will be "Stereo," though the number of channels on the MasterControl allow for a variety of configurations ranging from mono to 7.1 surround sound. The channels available in each drop-down menu in the window will depend on the option selected in the "MultiChannel Config" menu.

9. **Specify the System Latency Compensation:** If you are experiencing system instability, experiment with these settings in order to find the best combination of buffer size and latency compensation. Note that, if you choose an option other than "none," the lowest buffer sizes will not be available.

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MAC AUDIO CONFIGURATION

AUDIO MIDI SETUP

On Mac, after you install the drivers, open the Audio MIDI Setup utility.

Choose "Alesis Firewire" for your "Default Input" and "Default Output" devices under Mac's Audio MIDI Setup utility.

Audio MIDI Setup is available from your Mac's Applications / Utilities folder.

You may want to drag Audio MIDI Setup to your dock, so you can access it easily.

Also, choose your clock source, and set your sample rate here.

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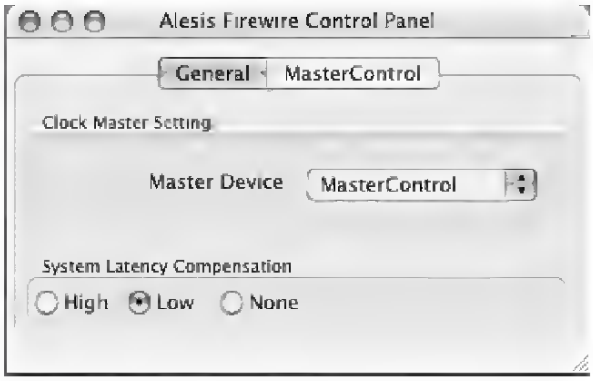
ALESIS FIREWIRE CONTROL PANEL (MAC)

On Mac, buffer sizes are controlled by individual applications, and clocking and sample rates are set in Audio MIDI Setup. Therefore, the Alesis Firewire Control panel—available either by pressing "Configure Device" from within Audio MIDI setup or by choosing Preferences from your Apple (top left) menu—provides just a few options:

■ General tab



1. Master Device: Ensure that your MasterControl is an option in this drop-down box. If the MasterControl is not shown, then your computer does not "see" it. Check the mixer's connection to your computer.

You can chain multiple Alesis Firewire devices together via their Firewire ports. If you do so, you must choose one of them, here, as the clock master for your entire system.

2. Specify the System Latency Compensation: If you are experiencing system instability, experiment with these settings in order to find the best combination of buffer size and latency compensation. Note that, if you choose an option other than "none," the lowest buffer sizes will not be available.

■ Nickname tab

Every MasterControl has a unique serial number. Here, you can change your MasterControl's name as it is seen by this specific computer. We recommend that you change the nickname (for instance, to "MasterControl").

Additionally, your MasterControl's firmware version is shown on this tab, towards the bottom. Check **www.alesis.com** to see if a firmware update is available.

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GLOBAL MENUS

Press the GLOBAL button to edit the MasterControl's configuration, including where you want to route which channels, talkback and footswitch settings, and other features.

Use the PAGE buttons beneath the DISPLAY to scroll through the settings. For each page, you can scroll through your options with the VALUE / ENTER knob at top right. To save your new settings, press the knob.

> ***Note:*** *If you are going to turn off the MasterControl after saving a global setting, wait at least five seconds first. Some global settings are not saved immediately.*

■ Screen Contrast

Adjust the contrast of the DISPLAY to an appropriate setting.

■ Output A / B / C Source

With the Output Source pages, you can decide which pairs of channels of your digital audio workstation (DAW) will be sent to the three outputs of the MasterControl.

Each output – A, B, and C – can receive audio from the DAW's Channels 1 and 2 (Output 1-2), Channels 3 and 4 (Output 3-/4), or Channels 5 and 6 (Output 5-6). A channel pair can be sent to multiple outputs at the same time or none at all, allowing you flexibility when monitoring the audio in your DAW. By default, the assignments are:

- OUTPUT A SOURCE: Output 1-2
- OUTPUT B SOURCE: Output 3-4
- OUTPUT C SOURCE: Output 5-6

Note: *Regardless of how you assign the Output Sources, you can still monitor the physical outputs (on the rear panel of the MasterControl) with the MasterControl's* SPEAKERS / OUTPUTS *buttons. You can assign what audio is sent to these outputs in your DAW. Your headphones can always monitor any of these channel pairs, as well, as determined by the Phones Source pages (below).*

■ Phones 1/2 Source

Use the Phones Source pages to decide which pairs of channels of your DAW will be sent to each HEADPHONE OUTPUT (on the rear of the MasterControl). Like the Output Sources above, a channel pair can be sent from the DAW to one, both, or neither of the HEADPHONE OUTPUTS.

■ 1-2 LEVEL knob operation

By default, this knob controls the levels for outputs 1 and 2 for any of the line outputs that are mapped to them in the OUTPUT A / B / C Source menus.

You can change this control here to affect not only 1-2 but also 3-4. A third option, designed for 5.1 surround mixing, allows this knob to control all of the outputs (1-6) as played through the MasterControl's six line outputs.

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■ Direct Monitoring

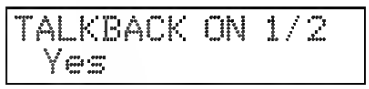
When the MasterControl's Direct Monitoring function is enabled, the signal you are hearing is taken directly from the MasterControl rather than from your DAW. This allows you and your musicians to monitor the audio with no perceptible delay (latency). Here, you can choose whether or not the Direct Monitoring signal will be blended with the signal from the DAW in each channel pair.

You can adjust the blend of the Direct Monitoring signal with the DAW's output by turning the DIRECT MON LEVEL knob. At 0%, you will hear only the DAW's output. At 100%, you will hear the Direct Monitoring signal at an equal volume with the DAW's output. In the latter case, you may hear the input signal twice, with a short delay between each instance ("slapback"). To hear the Direct Monitoring signal alone, simply turn off the input monitoring in your DAW.

Note: *At 176.4kHz and 192kHz, you can only use the MasterControl's direct monitoring function on the Output Source A – or Channels 1 / 2.*

■ Talkback

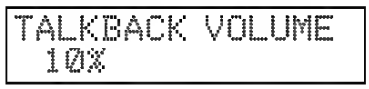
Pressing the MasterControl's TALKBACK button will activate the built-in microphone above it, which you can use to talk to your musicians. When you select "Yes," the talkback signal will cause the DAW's outputs to be muted (so talkback can "override" whatever else is coming over the headphones or monitors). When you select "No," the TALKBACK button will have no effect.



Note: *You will not be able to use talkback while recording at 176.4kHz and 192kHz.*

■ Talkback Volume

This setting determines the volume of the talkback signal.



■ Optical Port 2

The ADAT 2 / S/PDIF port on the rear panel of the MasterControl can accept either ADAT or optical S/PDIF information, which you can select here.

■ Footswitch Setup

When a footswitch is attached to the FOOTSWITCH connection on the rear panel of the MasterControl, it can be set to operate on the control surface or act as the TALKBACK button.

■ Footswitch Polarity

This setting changes the polarity of a connected footswitch. The default is "Positive On," meaning the pedal, when pressed, will activate or engage whatever it is set to. Selecting "Negative On" will configure it such that it will be on as long as the pedal is not being pressed.

■ Send SysEx

Access this page to download a SysEx file to the MasterControl to change the configuration of its Editable Controls for its various Presets. Select which Preset this will affect by turning the PUSH SELECT knob. You can select any of the 12 Presets or the global configuration ("GLOBL"):

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■ Factory Reset

Activating a Factory Reset will restore all default settings and Preset configurations. If you want to reset, select "Reset all." You will be asked, "You sure?" If you want to continue, select "Yes." The DISPLAY will read "Resetting" with two asterisks moving across the screen to indicate its progress.

When the reset is complete, the MasterControl will reboot itself automatically.

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MONITORING & CONTROL ROOM FEATURES

■ Speakers / Outputs Controls

The SPEAKERS / OUTPUTS buttons allow you to monitor the MasterControl's MON / LINE OUTPUTS as follows:

- The "A" SPEAKERS / OUTPUTS button monitors the "A" outputs (Channels 1 and 2)
- The "B" SPEAKERS / OUTPUTS button monitors the "B" outputs (Channels 3 and 4)
- The "C" SPEAKERS / OUTPUTS button monitors the "C" outputs (Channels 5 and 6)

You can monitor any of these three outputs individually or simultaneously. Note that the channel pairs mentioned above simply refer to the stereo channels (L and R) on the rear panel of the MasterControl, not the channels in your DAW. You can decide what channels from your DAW are sent to these outputs in the OUTPUT SOURCE page in the Global Menu.

The 1-2 LEVEL knob controls the volume sent out of the analog outputs for any of the analog output pairs that are set to listen to DAW outputs 1/2. If you wish to adjust the levels of other channels, you will have to do so within your DAW. This knob will not affect the volume levels of the HEADPHONE OUTPUTS (which are actually controlled by the HEADPHONE 1 and 2 knobs underneath it).

■ Headphone Controls

The HEADPHONE 1 and HEAPDHONE 2 knobs control the volume of the signal sent to the respective HEADPHONE OUTPUTS on the MasterControl's rear panel. (These controls act independently from the SPEAKERS / OUTPUTS buttons and the 1-2 LEVEL knob.) You can decide what channels from your DAW are sent to these outputs in the PHONES SOURCE page in the Global Menu.

■ Talkback Controls

Pressing the TALKBACK button allows you to talk to your musicians over the built-in microphone above the button. When using talkback, the microphone's signal will "override" whatever else is coming over the speakers (that is, the MasterControl's Output A, B, and/or C) *and* the headphones. You may hear a "click" when you press or release the TALKBACK button, which is normal. If you want to avoid this, use an external footswitch (and set it to control the talkback feature in the Global Menus).

> ***Note:*** *You will not be able to use talkback while recording at 176.4kHz and 192kHz.*

You can set which output channels talkback affects and at what volume, in the Global Menu. Make sure the appropriate SPEAKERS / OUTPUTS buttons are activated when using talkback – if your musicians can't hear that output, they won't hear talkback either.

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DIRECT MONITORING

The MasterControl contains a hardware-based, DSP mixer which enables you to route the inputs to the outputs directly, bypassing any latencies associated with sending the audio to and from the computer. This hardware-based routing provides the minimum possible latency – only the time required for audio to be converted between analog and digital formats and then back again to analog. This time is essentially imperceptible (just a few milliseconds at 44.1kHz, half of that at 88.2kHz, and a quarter of that at 176.4kHz).

■ When to Use Direct Monitoring

When you are recording simpler projects that put less strain on your computer, you can generally choose lower buffer settings in the Alesis Firewire control panel. When your buffer sizes are low enough, you can use the input monitoring feature of your DAW recorder, and the latency (delay) experienced by your performers will be very slight. Using such low buffer settings, you may find use of the MasterControl's direct monitoring feature to be unnecessary.

However, when you add more tracks and plug-ins, you will need to increase your buffer sizes in order for your system to keep operating smoothly. At this point, it makes sense to mute the input monitoring on your DAW and use the MasterControl's digital mixer.

■ Configuring the GLOBAL menus

In the Global menus, choose whether you want to hear the direct signal via the MasterControl's MON / LINE OUTPUT pairs 1/2, 3/4, and/or 5/6.

■ Creating a Direct Monitoring Mix

Press the DIRECT MONITOR button on the left side of the MasterControl. The button will light, and the faders will snap to their Direct Monitoring positions. Press the BANK LEFT (<) and BANK RIGHT (>) button to access the following outputs:

- Analog Outputs (Tracks 1-8)
- ADAT1 (Tracks 1-8)
- ADAT2 (Tracks 1-8) *or* Optical S/PDIF (Tracks 1-2)
- Coaxial S/PDIF (Tracks 1-2)

In each bank, adjust the volume using the faders. Adjust the pan position using the knobs. Press MUTE or SOLO on the Master Control's surface to mute or solo individual tracks. Press SELECT to center any channel's pan position.

Raise or lower the overall Direct Monitoring mix with the DIRECT MON LEVEL knob.

Whenever you exit the Direct Monitoring Mode, your settings (fader placement, pan position, and the DIRECT MON LEVEL amount) will be saved automatically.

Note that the levels set here will be different from the levels returned from your DAW, if you have your DAW's direct monitoring (echo) feature enabled.

■ Special Considerations at Double- and Quad-Speed Sample Rates

At dual rates – 88.2kHz and 96kHz – the first optical port's inputs are halved, from eight ADAT channels to four channels. The second optical port only operates as an optical S/PDIF input at these rates; ADAT is disabled. To avoid hearing glitches in the input audio caused by data mismatches, disconnect any ADAT devices from the second optical port at 88.2kHz and 98kHz.

You can adjust all eight faders in the various banks, regardless of the sample rate. The settings you assign will be used when you use lower sample rates.

At quad rates – 176.4kHz and 192kHz – both the digital inputs and talkback become unavailable. At these rates, direct monitoring is only available to outputs 1/2, not outputs 3/4 and 5/6.

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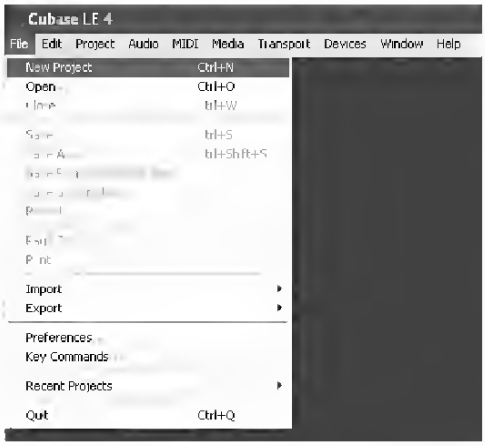
CREATING A CUBASE LE PROJECT FOR RECORDING

Once you have set up Cubase to work with the MasterControl, you're ready to create an audio project.

1. Choose **File ▶ New Project.**



2. You can begin with a template or an empty file. For now, begin with an empty file.

3. Cubase needs to know where to place audio. Choose a directory here.

An excellent scheme for storing your projects is to create a directory called "audio projects." Then, within that folder, create a new folder for each song you work on.

Cubase will store your song file and all associated audio files (in a folder called "Audio") in that same folder.

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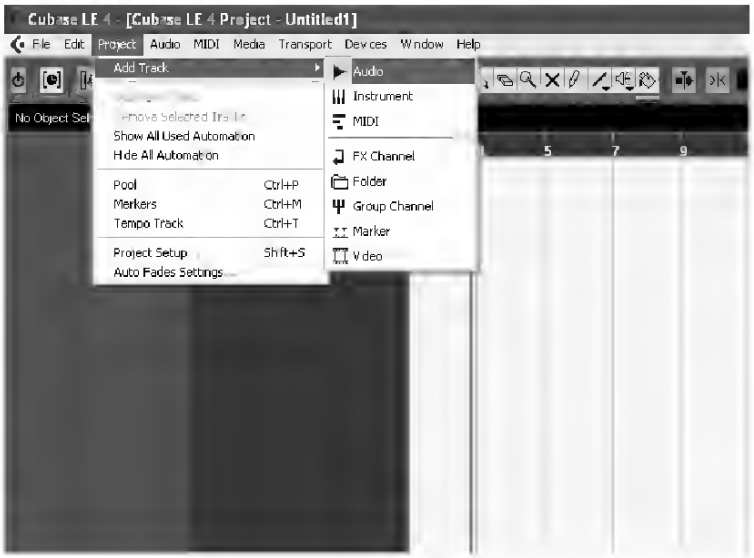
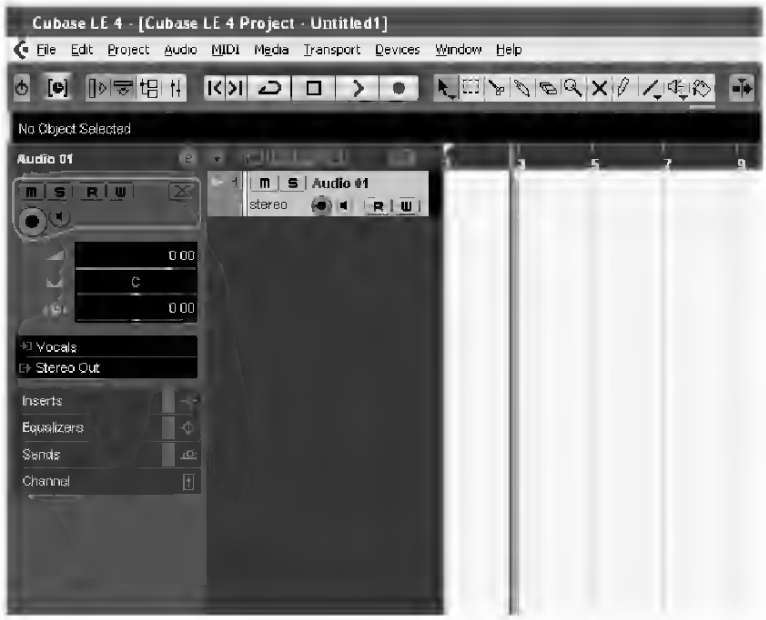
4. Now, you have a blank project. Add an audio track for recording by choosing **Project ▶ Add Track ▶ Audio**.



5. Be sure that the "inspector" – a strip on the left-hand side of Cubase that shows all sorts of information about the selected track – is active. If your view is similar to that shown below, the Inspector is active. If you do not see all of the information on the left-hand side, the Inspector is not active. To activate it, press the "Show Inspector" button towards the upper left of the screen (just below the **Edit** menu in the following picture).

Later, you can hide the Inspector if you want to save space on your screen.



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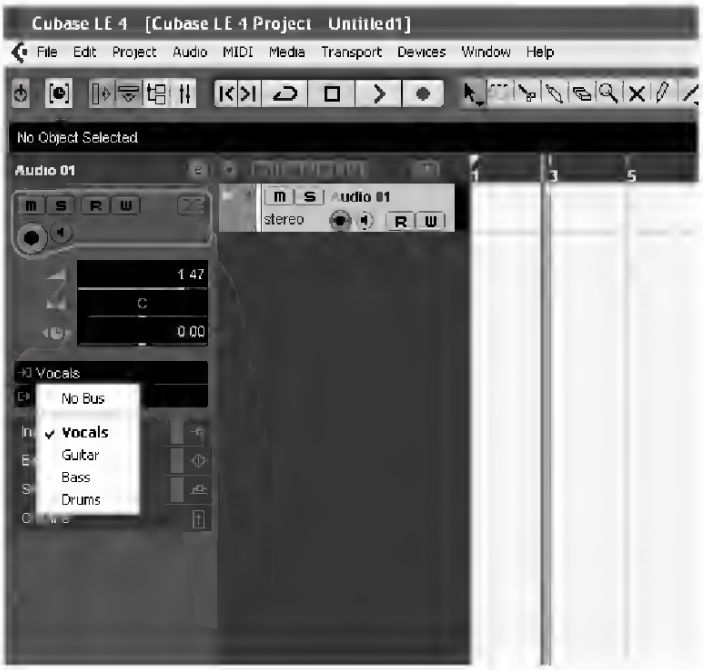
6. Choose an input for your track by selecting it from the drop-down menu of available inputs. By default, the input will be the first stereo bus in the "VST Connections" window.



7. You will do most of your monitoring through the mixer. However, if you want to monitor with Cubase's effects, or if you just want to hear what the computer is hearing, press the direct monitoring button next to the Record Enable button.

Note that using the MasterControl's direct monitoring causes a small delay as the digital audio is being processed. For this reason, when you use direct monitoring, you may want to mute Cubase's input monitoring so as not to hear the audio signal twice.

Add additional audio tracks as needed. Record-enable each one and press the RECORD button to begin recording.

For additional information, consult your software's documentation.

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IMPORTANT POINTS FOR USERS OF VARIOUS DAWS

When using the MasterControl with various Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs), you will find the control surface interacts slightly differently with some of them. This is normal! This section lists the kinds of control surface behavior that are unique to certain DAWs, using their current versions at the time of this writing.

Some important notes:

- *Button operations F1 through F8, and Shift-F1 through Shift-F8, refer to control surface (Mackie Control) functions. These functions are not the same as those on your regular ASCII keyboard.*
- *Open your DAW only after you select the proper Preset on the MasterControl. If your DAW's controls seem out of sync with the MasterControl, reset the control surface from your DAW.*
- *If you use the wrong MasterControl preset with a DAW program, the communication between your computer and the MasterControl may appear to be behaving correctly in the* DISPLAY *but actually be incorrect.*

CUBASE / NUENDO

- When using a footswitch, assign it to "User A." To use the footswitch, you will need to assign a function to "User A" under Cubase's/Nuendo's "Mackie Control" setup screen.
- The SCRUB button does not work in Cubase LE4.
- If you use the < BANK > or < TRACK > buttons when Rows 2 or 3 are selected, the LEDs next to each row may flicker briefly, which is normal.
- By default, Cubase/Nuendo will record arm the last track touched. You can disable this behavior by going to Preferences and navigating to Preferences> Edit> Project &Mixer. There, uncheck "Enable Record on Selected Track."
- Be sure to choose "Mackie Control" as the control surface. Do not select "Mackie HUI," as HUI's protocol is incompatible with the MasterControl's Cubase / Nuendo preset.

ABLETON LIVE

- While Live is in Arrange mode, SCRUB mode moves the playhead. While Live is in Session Mode, SCRUB scrolls vertically instead.
- Row 3 ("Input") is page 4/4 in Live's I/O menu. Choose "Auto-Selection" in Live for this page to be properly selected. Pressing the third ROW SELECT button repeatedly on the MasterControl will allow you to see the intermediate display states.

CAKEWALK SONAR

- To make the MasterControl's MASTER FADER control more than just the left output, click the LINK (lock) icon in the console (mixer) view on SONAR's master fader.
- The MasterControl's REW / FF buttons have different functions while in Loop, Select, Punch, and Marker Modes in Sonar.
    - Loop Mode: REW or FF jumps to the left or right boundary of the loop, respectively.
    - Select Mode: REW or FF jumps to the left or right edge of the selection, respectively.
    - Punch Mode: REW or FF jumps to the Punch In or Punch Out points, respectively.
    - Marker Mode: REW or FF jumps to the left or right marker on the timeline.

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LOGIC PRO

- Ensure that you choose a "Mackie Control" control surface. The "Logic Control" control surface uses a different set of MIDI messages and is not compatible with the Alesis MasterControl.

- Rows 2 and 3 on the MasterControl correspond to different modes in Logic:

  Row 2 is **Send Mode**. Four "Send Parameter" options are selectable within Logic for this row:

  1. Destination (incompatible with the MasterControl)
  2. Level (dB)
  3. Position (Pre-/Post-)
  4. Mute (Active/Muted)

  We suggest choosing "Level" or "Position" for this parameter. "Destination" (the default in Logic) will not work with the MasterControl.

  If zoom mode is not enabled on the MasterControl, you can use the up and down arrows around the jog/shuttle wheel to navigate amongst the available sends in this row.

  Row 3 is **CSParam Mode**. Eight "Channel Strip Parameter" options are selectable within Logic for this row:

  1. Volume
  2. Pan
  3. Format
  4. Input (incompatible with the MasterControl)
  5. Output (incompatible with the MasterControl)
  6. Automation Mode
  7. Group
  8. Displayed Parameter

  "CSParam" is re-assignable. The default is "Volume." We recommend using "Format," which can turn effects on and off, or "Automation Mode," which cycles through the various automation options for the selected track.

  If zoom mode is not enabled on the MasterControl, you can change the parameter that you are affecting by using the left and right arrows around the jog/shuttle wheel in this row.

- "Write" is used to turn automation on. Automation can only be defeated in Logic by pressing the "Read" button. "Read" toggles between "on" and "off."

- By design, the MasterControl's MASTER fader can control Logic's MASTER output. However, Logic does not automate this channel. For bi-directional control over the output level, use Logic's OUT 1-2 fader, which appears as an ordinary channel within the right-most bank of your Logic project.

SAMPLITUDE

- Press the Knob Row 2 and Knob Row 3 buttons repeatedly for different options available for these rows. The printed overlays provide only one of the different options available for each of the two knob rows.
- For the third row, which controls individual channel EQ, the first page controls the EQ parametrically. The first two bands are assigned to the knobs. Press BANK > to access the last two bands. Double-click on the EQ icon in the mixer or the arrange view to see the entire view of the parametric EQ. The second page operates as indicated on the included overlay.

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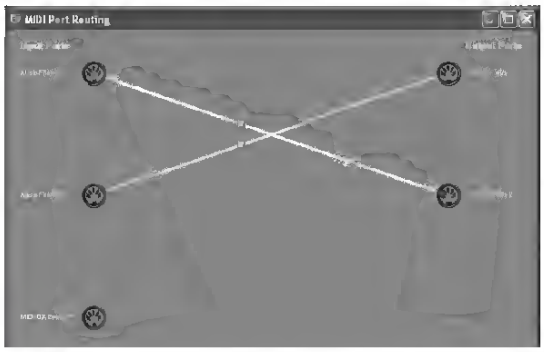
DIGITAL PERFORMER

- Row 2 of the MasterControl is not mapped.
- Vertical Zoom is not possible from the MasterControl.
- MasterControl's ZOOM button cycles through three stages (as opposed to two on most other DAWs): unlit, lit, and flashing. It will be lit when it is on and unlit when it is off. When the button is flashing, no zoom functions are possible using the cursor buttons.
- Grouping and ungrouping faders must be done within the Digital Performer software. This cannot be done from the MasterControl.

ALESIS HD24 / HD24XR

- This preset allows one-way control from the MasterControl to an Alesis HD24 or HD24XR.
- COMPUTER CONNECTION: This preset requires you to connect the MasterControl to a computer via Firewire, as normal.
- MIDI CABLE CONNECTIONS: Using standard MIDI cables, connect the HD24's MIDI OUT to the MasterControl's 5-pin MIDI IN. Connect the MasterControl's 5-pin MIDI OUT to the HD24's MIDI IN.
- Use a MIDI utility application to route the MasterControl's:
    - control surface MIDI OUT data out of the 5-pin MIDI OUT port.
    - 5-pin MIDI IN data to the control surface's MIDI IN.

The following illustration shows this routing using the free Windows program MIDI-OX:



- Ensure that your MIDI utility application is set to pass SysEx information in both directions. If you are using MIDI-OX, enable its Pass SysEx feature from the bottom of the Options pull-down menu.
- Ensure that you set the "Send MMC" parameter to "Yes" on the HD24's MIDI01 utility page.
- This preset allows you to use the transport controls and jog wheel with the HD24.
    - The SELECT buttons exclusively record-arm any one of the HD24's channels 1-8.
    - The RECORD buttons exclusively record-arm any one HD24 channel 9-16.
    - The SOLO buttons exclusively record-arm any one HD24 channel 17-24.
    - The MUTE buttons record-arms pairs of channels (1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, or 15-16).
- The MasterControl's SELECT/RECORD/SOLO/MUTE buttons and transport control buttons never light. Additionally, the faders and knobs are not operational.
- Via this preset, the HD24 does not respond to disarm messages but rather only to a master message setting the REC ARM status of all 24 tracks at once. So, for example, if you have record enabled tracks 1-8 and you want to "disarm" tracks 1-4, issue a command to "REC ARM 5-8". That will disarm all other tracks except for 5-8, including tracks 1-4. Press EDIT to choose various options for the ASSIGNABLE buttons to arm and disarm multiple specific tracks.

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PRO TOOLS

- JOG is unavailable in Pro Tools. This is a limitation of the HUI protocol used by Pro Tools. Pressing the SCRUB button puts the JOG WHEEL into Scrub Mode.
- When scrubbing, if you want your cursor to remain at the last scrub point in the timeline, go to Setup>Preferences>Operation>Transport and check "Edit Insertion Follows Scrub/Shuttle." This is necessary if you wish to use an edit function such as SEPARATE in conjunction with the jog wheel.
- When you add tracks in Pro Tools, including at the very start of a project, Pro Tools appears to lock out the track selection buttons on the MasterControl. To make the buttons functional again, hold one SELECT button and press another; then press one of the BANK or TRACK buttons.

REASON

- You may want to lock the mixer to "Mackie Control" Mode when using Reason. To do this, right-click on the left side of the mixer and choose the appropriate option.
- Only the bottom row of the MasterControl's DISPLAY will show data.
- The TRACK buttons function in Reason, but the BANK buttons are not functional

SOUNDTRACK PRO

- The MasterControl's < TRACK > buttons do not function in Soundtrack Pro.
- The LEDs for the SELECT buttons do not function in Soundtrack Pro, but they will still select the channel.

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PLUG-IN 1, 2

- These presets are designed to control virtual instruments and effects plugins. If you are using a virtual instrument within a DAW, you will need to disconnect the Alesis Firewire MIDI ports from control surface operation (Mackie Control or HUI) so that you can use the MasterControl as a generic MIDI controller.

  In these presets:

  - The eight channel faders are mapped to CC 12-19.
  - The Master fader is mapped to CC 20.
  - The knobs are mapped to CC 22-29.
  - The SELECT/REC/SOLO/MUTE buttons are mapped to CC 102-117.
    - On the first channel strip:
      - SELECT sends NOTE ON for CC 102.
      - REC sends NOTE OFF for CC 102.
      - SOLO sends NOTE ON for CC 103.
      - MUTE sends NOTE OFF for CC 103.
    - Similarly, the second channel strip begins with CC 104, and the eighth (last) channel strip ends with CC 117.
  - The ASSIGNABLE buttons are mapped to CC 01, 02, 30, 31 (bank A) and CC 41, 41, 43, 66 (bank B). Similar to channel strip operation, the TOP button always sends a NOTE ON, and the BOTTOM button always sends the corresponding NOTE OFF message.

- In PLUG-IN 1, the ASSIGNABLE buttons can be mapped to the values above or any CC values from 46-90, inclusive.
- In PLUG-IN 2, the ASSIGNABLE buttons can be mapped to the values above or any CC values from 84-117, inclusive. Switching between these two presets allows you access to more CC's than would be available using only a single preset.
- Consult your virtual instrument's or effect's documentation to learn how to map the MasterControl's MIDI messages to your software's controls.

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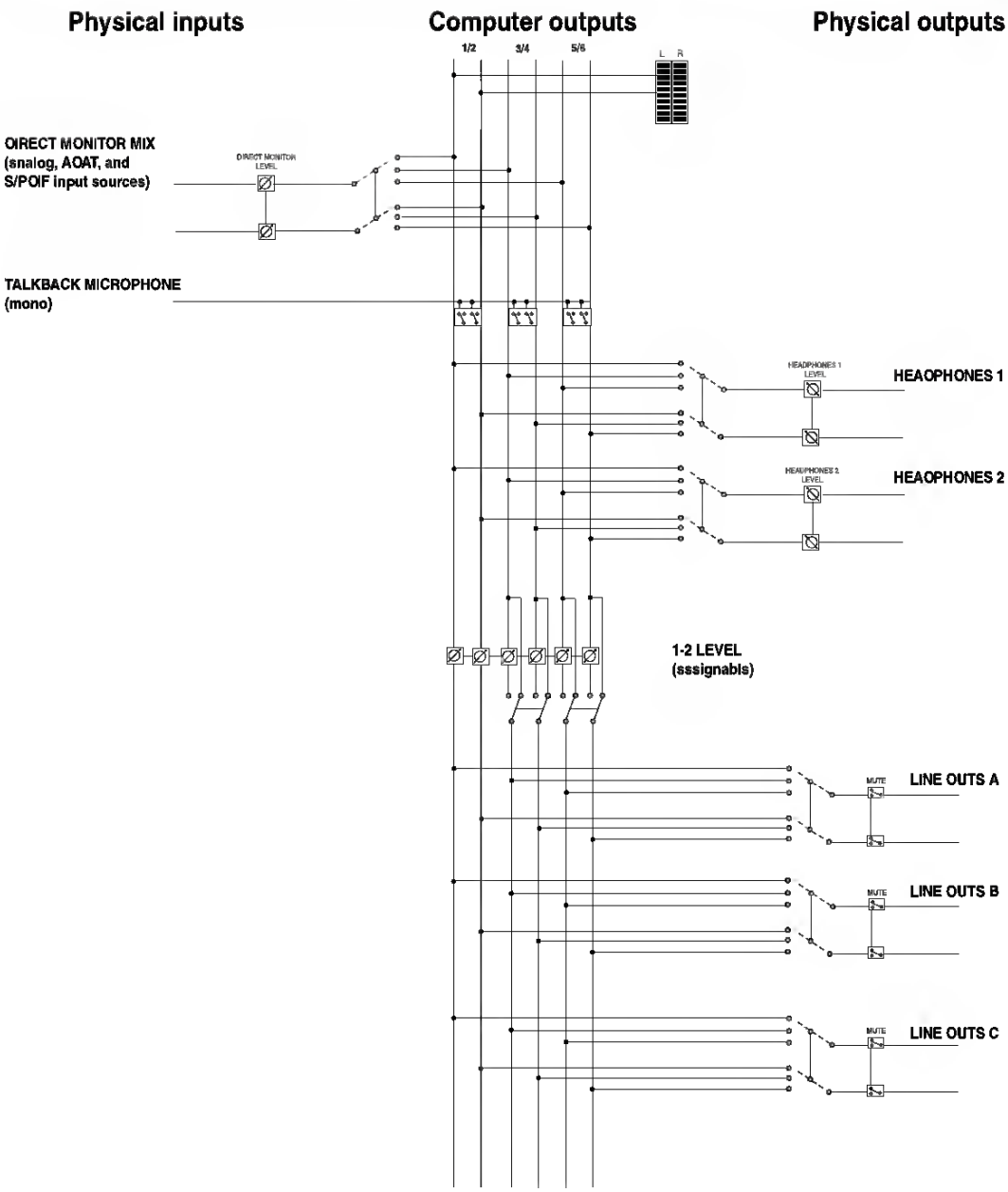
SIGNAL FLOW DIAGRAM



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SPECIFICATIONS

■ Microphone preamplifier

Gain range: +9.1dB to +59.2dB

Impedance: 3.67K @ min gain; 3.33K @ max gain

■ Line preamplifier

Gain range: -7dB to +43.1dB

■ Maximum input signal levels before clipping

Mic In to Line Out:

At min gain: 9.6dBu in, 18.7dBu out (gain = 9.1dB)
At max gain: -40.5dBu in, +18.7dBu out (gain = 59.2dB)

Line In 1-2 Max input signal level before clipping (at midband frequencies):

At unity gain: 18.7 to 18.9dBu
At min gain: 25.7 to 25.9dBu
At max gain: -24.4 to -24.2dBu

Line In 3-6 Max input signal level before clipping: +17.8dBu typical

■ Frequency Response

Line Inputs 1-6 (Measured to Line Output at Unity Gain):

-.25dB at 20KHz, otherwise within ±0.1dB

Mic Inputs 1-2:

At min gain: +/- 0.1dB from 20Hz to 20kHz
At gain= 30dB: +0dB, -0.25dB from 20Hz to 20kHz
At max gain: Rolls off to -1.25dB at 20Hz, otherwise flat within 0.1dB

■ Total Harmonic Distortion + Noise, Signal-to-Noise

Mic Input 1-2 to Line Out (measurement bandwidth 20-22K):

At min gain with +10dBu output:
THD+N: 0.0022- 0.0025%
SNR: 103.3dB
At 30dB gain, +10dBu output:
THD+N: ≤ 0.004%
SNR: 102.7dB

Line Input 3-6 to Line Out (20 measurement bandwidth 20-22K):

At unity gain, +4 to +10dBu out:
THD+N: ≤ 0.004%
SNR: 104.1dB

■ Dimensions

MasterControl only (without power adapter, packaging):

19.125" long x 14.5" deep x 3.75" high
486mm long x 368mm deep x 95mm high

■ Weight

MasterControl only (without power adapter, packaging):

7 pounds, 12 ounces
3.5 kilograms

Note: *Specifications accurate at time of manual creation. Specifications are subject to change without notice.*

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"Pro Tools" is a registered trademark of Digidesign, Inc.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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DEMO MATERIALS

Velocity- "I Can't Wait"
http://www.myspace.com/velocityrhyme
Vocals by Velocity
Written by Velocity and McKay Garner
Produced, recorded and mixed by McKay Garner
http://www.mckaygarner.com

Ten After 11- "Denial"
http://www.myspace.com/tenafter11
Vocals and guitars by Scott Hofman
Drums, bass, and more guitars by McKay Garner
Written by Scott Hofman and McKay Garner
Produced, recorded and mixed by McKay Garner
http://www.mckaygarner.com

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